

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College Students' Experiences of the Relationship between Private Off-campus Residences and Academic Performance: A Case of Majuba TVET College

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Year: 2020

NEWCASTLE

**A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the Master's degree in Higher Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
in the
School of Education
College of Humanities**

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As the supervisor for this candidate, I agree to the submission of this thesis.

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Date: 11 August 2020

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Dear Mrs Mtshali

Protocol reference number: HSS/2228/018M

Project Title: Relating Technical Vocational and Training (TVET) College Students' experiences of living in Private Off-Campus Residences to Academic Performance: A case of Majuba College.

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 28 November 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

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I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

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ABSTRACT

ENGLISH VERSION

Capacitating and developing public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges has been a major focus of the South African Department of Higher Education and Training in recent years. The key purpose of these colleges is to prepare graduates for the field of work by capacitating them to be highly productive in strategic areas of the economy. Despite the DHET's efforts, academic performance at TVET colleges remains a challenge for students, lecturers, college management, and policy makers as well as national leadership. The international and local literature confirms that the factors that negatively influence academic performance include financial challenges, socio-geographical factors and a lack of decent student housing. Due to the high numbers of students attending TVET Colleges and the deterioration of on-campus residences, private off-campus residences have dominated student housing since 2012. Recent statistics reveal that 74% of TVET students live in private off-campus residences located in poor communities surrounding the campuses. This study examined the relationship between TVET students' experiences of living in such private off-campus residences and their academic performance. Drawing on the theory of Cultural Capital, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Effective Teaching and Learning and Housing Productivity theory, it aimed to establish the participants' ontological, epistemological and axiological understanding of the factors affecting their participation and academic performance against the background of their experiences of living in private off-campus residences. A qualitative, interpretive research design informed the case study's approach that focused on participants who attended the Centre for People Development at Majuba TVET College in Madadeni, KwaZulu-Natal.

Purposive sampling was employed to select 20 participants and data was produced by means of in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. The data was analyzed according to themes derived from the theoretical framework. The study found that the participants who lived in private off-campus residences experience serious challenges that negatively affect their academic performance and cause some to drop out of college. These include financial problems that they entered college with owing to their poor socio-economic backgrounds. This was further exacerbated by delayed payment of National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) grants. Social challenges, learning challenges, a lack of facilities at private off-campus residences, lack of college support and inadequate parental involvement as a result of living far from home also contributed to the participants' poor academic performance. The study concludes that TVET Colleges, the DHET and other stakeholders need to review current policies and practices relating to student residences with the aim of improving the quality of the lives of students who live in private off-campus residences. In turn, this will improve their academic performance, to the benefit of themselves, their communities and society at large.

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| CTTT | TVET Colleges Technical Task Team |
| DHET | Department of Higher Education and Training |
| DoE | Department of Education |
| ELSEN | Education for Learners with Special Education Needs |
| HE | Higher Education |
| HEI | Higher Education Institution |
| MNSFSH | Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing |
| NATED | National Accredited Technical Education Diploma |
| NCV | National Certificate Vocational |
| NSFAS | National Student Financial Aid Scheme |
| NSSE | National Survey of Student Engagement |
| NQF | National Qualification Framework |
| OL | Open Learning |
| SEN | Special Education Needs |
| SETA | Sector Education and Training Authority |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |

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Chapter 1: Background and Context of the Study

1.1 Introduction

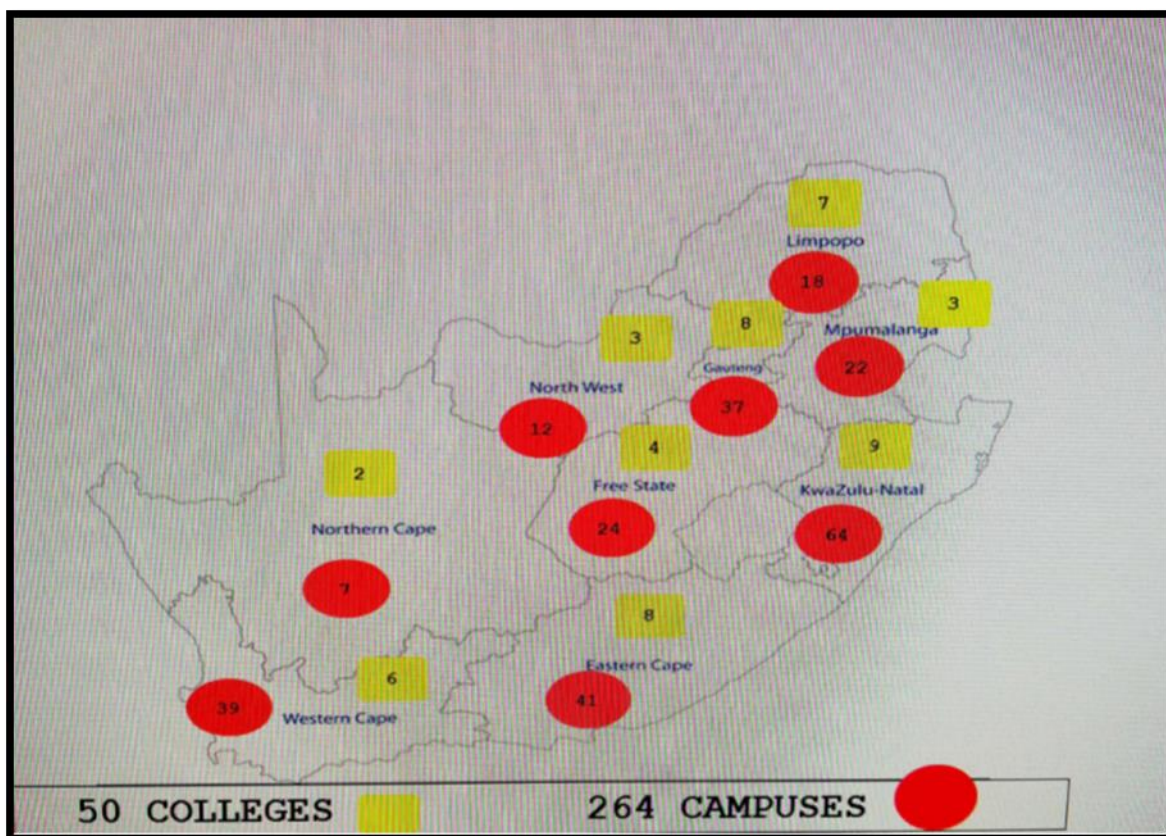
The study investigated the relationship between Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and their academic performance by means of a case study of the Centre for People Development (CPD) at Majuba TVET College in Madadeni, KwaZulu-Natal.

The origins of the term TVET can be traced to the World Congress on TVET in 1999 in Seoul, Republic of Korea (UNESCO, 1999a). There is no universally accepted definition of TVET (FET Summit Task Team 2, 2010) and terminology and acronyms referring to this phenomenon vary from country to country. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines TVET as 'the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and selected sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life' (UNESCO, 2001, p. 15). TVET has been described as a crucial driver of social equity, inclusion and sustainable development (Terblanche, 2017, p. 32) and in preparing young people for the world of work (Staten, 2016). In South Africa, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (2018, p. 32) provides specialized professional support to public TVET Colleges in the different provinces.

This chapter presents the background of the study, the problem statement, research objectives and questions. The research context, theoretical framework, and the research methodology employed are introduced and the chapter concludes with the structure of the dissertation.

1.2 Background to the Study

Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges were established in South Africa in 2002 following the promulgation of the FET Act, No. 98 of 1998. A hundred and fifty-two former technical colleges merged to form 50 colleges across the country's nine provinces (Department of Education (DoE) (2011). These Colleges were renamed TVET Colleges in 2013. McGrath (2012) notes that the sector spans 263 campuses and caters for approximately 220 000 students in public colleges and less than 100 000 in private ones. South African public TVET Colleges are subsidized by the government to the tune of roughly R4 billion per annum (FET Colleges, 2013).



Map 1: Map of Number of TVET Colleges and Campuses in South Africa: Source: Compiled by the Researcher (07 May 2019).

In recent years, the DHET has sought to capacitate and develop public TVET Colleges with the aim of converting them into high quality centers for post-matric education (DHET Policy Document, 2012). In 2012, DHET Minister Dr Blade Nzimande noted the department had adopted a comprehensive turnaround strategy to address the challenges confronting these colleges (Nzimande, 2012). According to UNESCO, TVET plays a major role in supporting development and addressing economic and social problems. The DHET (2015) notes that TVET Colleges focus on preparing students for practical work by capacitating them with the requisite skills, knowledge and attitudes. However, this requires a supportive environment that offers students easy access to decent housing and other amenities that the DHET (2011) terms ‘cultural capital’.

Pishghadam (2011) defines cultural capital as access to diverse resources, including private off-campus and on-campus residences, internet connectivity and access to libraries and computers. The South African literature points to links between TVET students’ cultural capital and their academic progress (Merenueto, 2012). According to Sahilberg and Oldroyd (2010), vocational education prepares school leavers for economic productivity. A DHET policy document (2009) notes that the TVET sector should produce graduates that are highly productive in strategic areas of the economy. Furthermore, access to

excellent quality education and training programs is an effective tool to redress inequality (National Development Strategy 111, 2010). The White Paper for Post School Education and Training (2011, p.14) posits that 'In this political dispensation South Africans get exposure to life changing skills enhancement opportunities, including among others on-the-job education and training programs aimed to uplift the experience and learning curves of citizens.

Despite these noble policy aspirations, academic performance at TVET Colleges remains a challenge for students, educators, college management, and policy makers. The factors that negatively influence such performance include financial challenges as well as socio-geographical factors. Mbambo (2016) notes that a lack of decent student housing may also negatively influence academic performance. The DHET (2012) observes that, in most TVET Colleges in South Africa, on-campus residences are only available to first and final-year students, with those in other years expected to look elsewhere. Off-campus arrangements include private residences, rented rooms and shared residences (Thomsen &Elkemo, 2010). Due to the increase in the number of students attending TVET Colleges and the deterioration of campus residences, private off-campus residences have dominated student housing since 2012 (South African Student Housing Policy, 2010).

Amole (2012) notes that on-campus halls of residences at TVET Colleges are overcrowded, while the White Paper for Post School Education and Training (2001, p.20) highlights that, 'during recent decades, students living on campus at TVET colleges are in a state of crisis'. Asuquo, Effiong and Agbola (2014) also observe that increased enrolments have not been accompanied by a corresponding rise in bed numbers in on-campus residences. Rapid deterioration of residential halls and poor maintenance has aggravated the situation. The South African Student Housing Policy (2010) asserts that a lack of decent, affordable and convenient residences negatively influences teaching and learning. A study by the Kregse Foundation (2012) also established a clear connection between the residence experiences of TVET students and academic performance at National Certificate Vocational (NCV) levels. Macintyre (2010) observes that student housing contributes to students' all- round development. TVET Colleges across the country enroll a considerable number of students and in order for them to produce well-qualified graduates they need to address housing issues (Omotayo, 2010, p.100).

It is against the above background that this study investigated the extent to which TVET students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences influenced their academic performance.

1.3 Problem Statement

According to Smith (2010, p.88), ‘social geographies refer to the study of people and their environment with particular emphasis on social factors’. The report of the Ministerial Committee for the Review of the Provision of Student Housing at South African Universities (RMCRPSHSA, 2011) noted that management of student residences involves far more than merely providing beds; social amenities also need to be provided, as do conducive learning conditions. The report added that standards of residence for public TVET college students vary widely. It highlighted the lack of proper and convenient housing, especially for students with disabilities. For example, students that rely on wheelchairs require accessible bathrooms and rooms as well as buildings with ramps.

TVET-MUST-RISE (DHET, 2018, p.18) notes that, TVET Colleges are mandated to provide students with education and training that will prepare them to work in industry. Learners that have completed Grade 9 register for NCV programs, while those that have Grade 12 but do not qualify for admission to university and employees that seek to upgrade their skills undertake National Accredited Technical Education Diploma programs. According to the DHET (2012), 17769 students participated in NCV level 2 and NATED N4 (beginners) programs in KwaZulu-Natal in 2016, but only 9788 were accommodated in on-campus residences. Thus, 55% lived in private off-campus residences. Stier’s study of six TVET Colleges in the Western Cape shows that of a total of 4896 NCV level 2 students enrolled in Electrical Engineering, Office Administration, Information Technology and Tourism, 1254 (24%) of whom were accommodated in on-campus residences while 3642 (74%) lived in private residences (DHET, 2013, p.35). These statistics highlight the large number of students living in private off-campus residences, mainly in communities surrounding TVET Colleges.

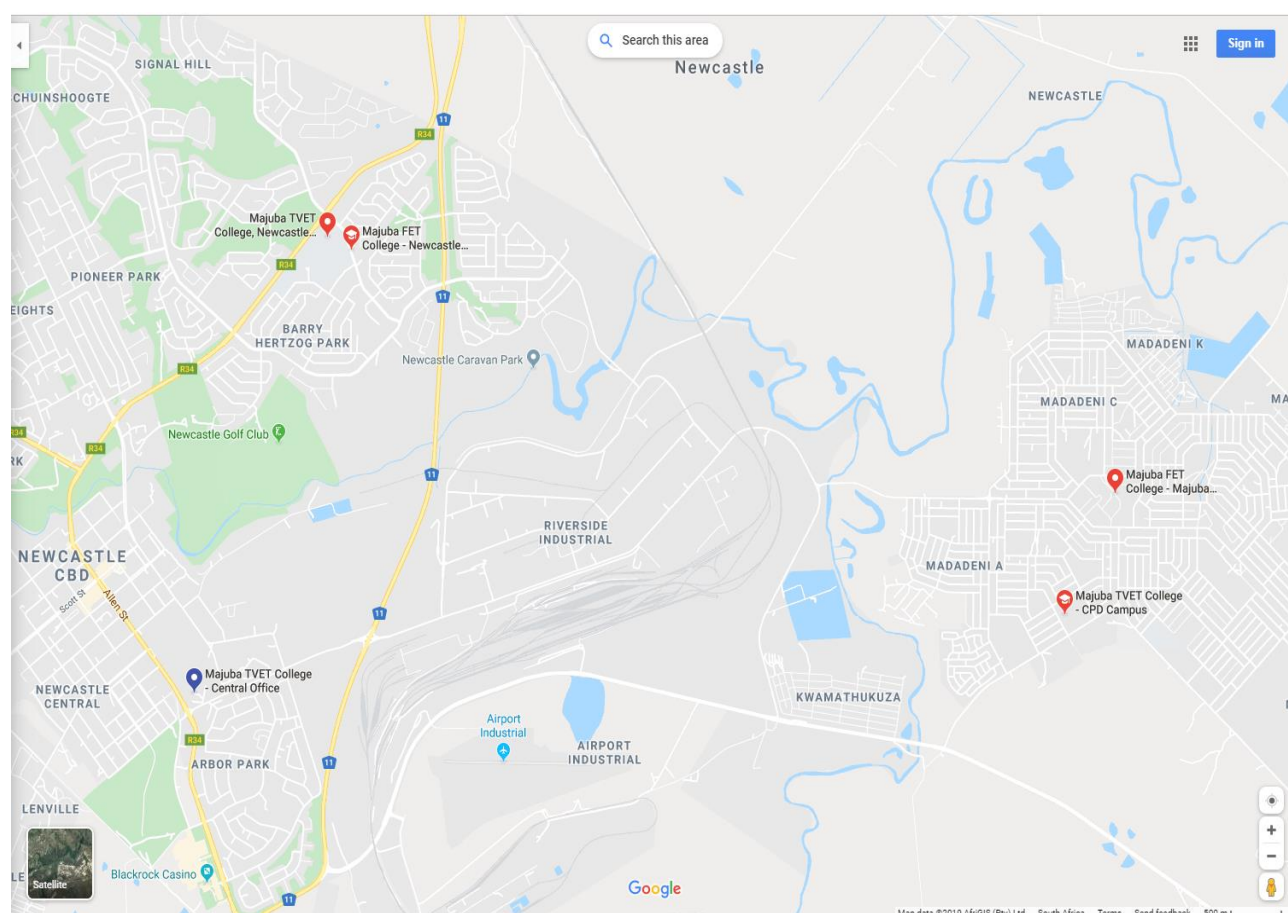
1.4 Location of the study

Majuba TVET College has seven campuses, the Centre for People Development (CPD); Information Technology and Business; Majuba Technology Centre; Newcastle Technology; Newcastle Training Centre; Dundee Technology Centre; and the Open Learning Unit. Its campuses offer business and engineering studies and a trade test center. They also offer distance learning.

This qualitative case study was conducted at the CPD in Section 2 Madadeni, Newcastle. The Majuba District is one of 11 district municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal. It is located in the northern part of the province and constitutes, Dannhouser, Utrecht and Newcastle local municipalities. Majuba is a highly populated district. Most of the students are from different municipalities, with some from other provinces as well as other African countries.

The community surrounding the campus in Madadeni lives in municipal housing and shacks in informal settlements. Many community members are unemployed and live in very poor conditions. They survive on social grants, work in the clothing sector for low wages, rent out portions of their homes and supplement their income through small informal businesses. Some TVET students from the research site live with their landlords in their homes, while others rent houses that are owned by landlords who do not live on site.

MAP 2: MADADENI TVET COLLEGE –GOOGLE MAP OF CPD CAMPUS 2019



1.5 Research Objectives and Questions

The study's objectives were:

1. To understand the experiences of TVET students living in private off-campus residences.
2. To investigate the relationship between TVET students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and their academic performance.
3. To explore why TVET students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences influence their academic performance in the way they do.

Research Questions.

1. What are TVET students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences?
2. How does the experience of living in private off-campus residences influence TVET students' academic performance?
3. Why does the experience of living in private off-campus residences influence TVET students' academic performance in the way that it does?

1.6 Theoretical Framework

I drew on the theory of cultural capital, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and the concepts of Effective Teaching and Learning and Housing Productivity in order to establish the students' ontological, epistemological and axiological understanding of the factors that affect their participation and academic performance, given their experiences of living in private off-campus residences.

Theory of cultural capital

Bourdieu's (1977) theory of cultural capital highlights the relationships between cultural capital, social capital, economic capital and habitué. Bourdieu (1998c) viewed economic, cultural and social capital as the three fields in the social space in which social action takes place and in which the education system is produced and reproduced. Drawing on the theory of cultural capital, this study was interested in understanding whether there was a relationship between social privilege, living conditions and the well-being of students and their academic performance.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Psychologist Abraham Maslow (2013) proposed a hierarchy or pyramid consisting of five levels of needs, including physiological/physical; safety/security; social needs; esteem/self-esteem and the need for self-actualization. This study examined whether students living in private off-campus residences were able to satisfy these different levels of need and how this related to their academic performance.

Housing productivity

This concept of housing productivity was used to examine the elements of student housing and students' social life in terms of academic performance (Agbola, 2015).

Effective teaching and learning

Behaviorists' views on learning were drawn on to assess the impact of different behavioral patterns within the educational environment and the living environment on the academic performance of participants who lived in private off-campus student residences (Watson, 1913 and Skinner, 1904-1990).

1.7 Significance of the study

The Green Paper (3) (cited in Cloete, 2012) set out the responsibilities of the HE Sector in promoting the goals of a strong democracy and a prosperous economy. In order to support the achievement of a fair, equitable, non-racial and non-sexist dispensation, there is a need to improve post-school education and training. However, there appears to be a lack of research on the challenges that confront the TVET sector especially from students' perspective. Given the link between skills development, productivity and economic growth, TVET is a crucial tool in achieving South Africa's economic objectives. Quality teaching and learning would enable TVET students to become productive employees, to the benefit of themselves as well as the broader society. Understanding the factors that hamper their academic performance is important such as situations where they are forced to resort to living in private off-campus residences that are not conducive to learning and which may hinder their academic performance.

While studies have been conducted on the link between private off-campus residence facilities and students' academic performance in South Africa (DHET, 2009), these mainly focused on universities, with little attention devoted to TVET Colleges, especially those in the rural northern region of KwaZulu-Natal. The current study aimed to fill this contextual and conceptual gap by examining students' experiences of living in private residences and the extent to which this influenced their academic performance at the CPD at Majuba TVET College in Madadeni, KwaZulu-Natal. Drawing on the above-mentioned theoretical framework, the study also aimed to make theoretical and methodological contributions with a special focus on students' experiences.

1.8 Research methodology and design

According to Christiansen, Betram and Land (2010, p.6), research is a 'system of inquiry, with the aim of having more insight and is always based on data generated through well-structured investigations'. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.124) note that the research design and methodology set out a plan that guides a study and ensures that the researcher successfully addresses the research objectives and questions. The research design and methodology should thus be determined by the research questions.

MacMillan and Schumacher (2014, p. 31) describe a research design as the 'structure of investigation used to obtain evidence' to answer the research questions. It 'describes in detail the procedures for conducting the research study, how the research study is set up and what methods of data collection will be used'. They add that a research design determines how the data collected should be analyzed in order to arrive at the most accurate answers to the research questions.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2013) note that qualitative research is carried out in a natural setting and entails the production of a multifaceted and all-inclusive picture of the phenomenon of interest. This study adopted a qualitative research design to determine the extent to which students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences influenced their academic performance at Majuba TVET College.

Focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and document analysis were used to gather data from the 20 participants.

1.9 Positionality

I am a lecturer at Majuba TVET College CPD and the high failure rate among students in my classes motivated me to enroll for Master's studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The focus of this study was thus motivated by my desire to understand the reasons for such poor student academic performance.

1.10 Overview of chapters

Chapter 1 presented the background of this study, the problem statement, the research objectives and questions. It also introduced the theoretical framework and the methodology employed to conduct this study.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature relevant to the study. It includes the policy framework for student residences at TVET Colleges, an international and national comparison of student residences and a review of previous studies' findings on the relationship between students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and their academic performance.

Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical framework that underpinned this study, including the theory of cultural capital, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and the concepts of Effective Teaching and Learning and Housing Productivity.

Chapter 4 presents the research methodology and design employed, including the research paradigm (interpretive), and research design and approach (qualitative). It discusses the sampling technique used to select the participants, and data collection and analysis. The steps taken to promote the reliability, validity and trustworthiness of the study are explained, as well as the ethical considerations that was taken into account. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the study's limitations.

Chapter 5: presents the data analysis and findings in relation to the first two research objectives. Two levels of analysis are applied. Level one analysis and interpretation makes meaning of what the participants said, while level two relates what they said to the literature. The data is presented according to the themes that emerged during data analysis.

Chapter 6 presents the data analysis and findings in relation to the third research objective. Level three analyses are applied to relate what the participants said to the theoretical framework.

Finally, chapter 7 presents the study's overall conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to the phenomenon under study, that is, the relationship between TVET students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and their academic performance. Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014, p. 105) state that a literature review involves 'searching for, reading, evaluating and summarizing as much as possible of the available literature that relates both directly and indirectly to your research topic'. Frankael and Wallen (2010, p. 17) observe that a literature review makes it easier for the researcher to delve deeper into the research topic. A literature review thus enables one to interpret and evaluate existing information on the same topic.

This review focuses on the policy framework for TVET Colleges and compares TVET institutions in South Africa with those in European and sub-Saharan African countries. The concepts of student residences; types of student residential places and the design of student residential halls are discussed, as well as the effects of residence halls on academic performance among students in HE; residence and academic performance at TVET Colleges; funding and its influence on student residence; and the factors that hamper the academic performance of students living in private off-campus residences.

2.2 TVET Colleges in South Africa: background, perceptions and policy on student residences

Worldwide, TVET Colleges are mandated to provide skills training in order to address poverty, unemployment and socio-economic instability (DoE, 2011). The National Policy Framework for the Department of Education (DHET, 2011) states that certification and examinations for core programs at South African TVET Colleges are coordinated by the DHET. Student support services cater for students' academic, social and physiological needs (DHET, 2011). The FET Report (2011, p. 46) observed that FET Colleges could be the first choice for young South Africans as they offer skills training that prepares them to take up positions in industry. According to the TVET-MUST-RISE (2018) document, TVET Colleges cater for a wide range of students, from those with any level of matric to those that have passed Grade 9, and those who do not have Grade 12. They also offer development programs for employees and entrepreneurs.

The DHET (2013) notes that enrollment in TVET Colleges has grown apace, giving rise to the challenge of accommodating more students while maintaining quality teaching and learning. Nonetheless, these colleges are often a less attractive option among students and do not enjoy the same status as universities

and other higher education institutions (HEIs). This appears to be a global phenomenon (Terblanche, 2017).

The DHET and the private sector have been called upon to finance student housing at the various HEIs in South Africa. The concept of housing productivity focuses on the impact of residences and social life on students' academic performance (Agbola, Olatubara & Alabi, 2015). It is argued that growth in both the quality and quantity of student housing results in improved academic performance, a more conducive learning environment and less student unrest and delinquent behavior (Merrill, Blood, Rabehorst & Whiteley, 2010d). The notion of housing productivity is thus pertinent to this study as the government and the private sector have not invested sufficient funds in student housing. This is true of Majuba TVET College, where housing construction would benefit both students and society as a whole (Omotayo, 2010).

Majuba TVET College has no on-campus residences and students have to resort to private off-campus accommodation (Majuba TVET Policy; TVET Colleges Policy and Procedures, 2019). Other TVET Colleges and HEIs that have residences on-campus cannot keep up with demand and many of their students also live in unsuitable private off-campus residences (University of Stellenbosch housing policy). This suggests that TVET Colleges need to renovate their buildings. On-campus student residences that are conducive to studying, and cater for rest and relaxation as well as socializing could have a positive result on academic performance (Tshwane University housing policy).

2.3 Comparison between accommodation at South African TVETs and international TVET institutions

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) aims to promote fair and equitable access to HE for South African students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Students that qualify for assistance receive funding to pay the full costs of tuition, and for meals, books, travel, and residence. The funding is supported by the government, and local and international sponsors, but is not sufficient for all those who seek access to HE. In other countries like the US and UK, most students rent private accommodation (Le Grand & Robinson 2018). For over 50 years, these countries have considered student residences as key to the learning process. However, over time, some tertiary residential sectors have focused less on the relationship between learning and accommodation and have come to regard residences as simply providing housing. This is evident in the emergence of private landlords (Franklin, 2012, p. 106). Franklin (2012) states that, as learning contexts, student residences should be in a good condition. In order to carry out effective teaching and learning, tertiary institutions have reviewed the role of residences in performance, involvement, and 'retention and transition' of students (Franklin, 2012, p. 106). As noted

previously, Majuba TVET College expects students to find their own private residence. This means that living conditions vary, with some students also living far from campus, burdening them with transport costs. Poor students that are unable to pay their rent on time are evicted, leading to frequent moves that disrupt their studies. According to Bouzarovski and Cauvain (2016, p. 324), ‘the dynamics of the demand for private residences for student living affects all aspects of the private residence market in England’. The concept of student residences is discussed below.

2.4 The concept of Student Residences

The McMillan Dictionary (2010, p. 1256) defines a residence as a ‘place to live or a place of temporary dwelling’. With regard to HEIs, a ‘residence is a place to live which is rented over a period of time during the course of pursuing a qualification in the college as well as other services enjoyed during this time’ (Adu-Gyamfi, 2014, p. 13).

Owalabi-Merus (2015) explains that a student residence is a place where students live and that it can be situated on or outside a campus. The former is known as ‘on-campus students while those residing outside the campus are referred to as off-campus students. According to Stier (2014, p. 2), a ‘students’ residence is more than just a place to live; it is an organization in which students are participants. This suggests that a student residence should support students’ academic life and provide for their social needs and goals during their college phase (Judith, 2010). Judith and Eikemo’s (2010) research on undergraduate student residences highlighted the need for access to resources as well as privacy. In Malaysia some students choose to live in private residences to avoid the noise and communal nature of on-campus residences (Omotaya, 2010). The cost of living in private off-campus residences versus staying on campus is another consideration. The participants in this study had no choice but to live in private off-campus residences since there are no on-campus residences at the Majuba TVET College.

2.5 Types of Student Residences

Ghari and Suleiman (2017) noted that student housing is a multi-faceted field of study. They argued that students are a distinct group with shared interests who need decent shelter when studying. Merrill et al. (2010) concur that a good shelter and/or place of residence reinforces teaching and learning whereas a poor one interrupts it and generates challenges. Crucial facilities in a student residence include electricity, water and sanitation, bathrooms and kitchen amenities that offer safety, comfort, and convenience. The extent to which these facilities are present or not in students’ residences may impact on their lived experiences and this may in turn influence their academic performance.

Hulton, Disrael, Dixon and Raymond's (2016) study found that residence facilities impacted on students' social behaviour, health, satisfaction and overall welfare. Poor facilities can cause numerous health problems, including stress and depression. These factors may influence students' capability to study and their academic performance. This study thus examined the relationship between students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and their academic performance.

The MNSFSH Report (2015) identifies different types of student residences, including on-campus and off-campus, as well as rooms in houses occupied by the home-owner (landlord¹). Such rooms are let by a landlord or by an accredited leasing agent acting on the landlord's behalf.

2.5.1 On-campus residence

On-campus residences are located on campus (MNSFSH Report, 2015). Provision of on-campus residences involves acquiring land, and financing for construction and maintenance of such buildings. Different parties (civil society, the state, the private sector) determine the types of student residences (halls of residence, dormitories, and other accommodation and off-campus residences) on different sites (off-campus or on-campus). Other considerations that HEIs don't always pay attention to are students' experiences of living in residences and the association between their health, academic performance, and religious and social factors. This study was mainly interested in students' academic performance.

According to Amole (2012), the place where a student resides during their studies not only positively or negatively impacts academic performance but also their health and well-being and social and economic life. While some universities and TVET Colleges offer on-campus residences, particularly for first-year students, some have to seek residence elsewhere. The South African government does not regard on-campus residences as a housing need, but an educational one (MNSFSH Report, 2015). However, each TVET College is mandated to cover a wide catchment area (DHET, 2015). This implies that, every year, students travel far from home in order to attend college. This exacerbates the existing student housing shortage (Amole, 2012). Furthermore, like private off-campus residences, the conditions in on-campus residences are often far from ideal.

Flowers (2010) argues that fully-fitted halls of residences are extremely costly. The typical design of student residences, with their small studies/bedrooms branching off a corridor deprives students of the freedom to choose a residence that suits them. It does not accommodate different tastes and the fact that some students are able to pay for more space makes it an inequitable situation (Amole, 2017; Flowers, 2010). Other scholars maintain that the focus on student residences has caused some TVET Colleges to

¹ A landlord is an owner who lets out a single room, outbuilding or residence to students in exchange for money (rent).

diverge from the goals for which they were originally established. They thus risk focusing more on students' welfare than on knowledge creation (George, Alexander & Agbola, 2015). Many students studying at TVET Colleges including Majuba TVET College, are forced to stay off campus. This study contributes to the literature by examining students' experiences of living in residences and how this impacts their academic performance. In order for HE to produce the human capital required to grow the South African economy, the DHET, TVET Colleges and other HEIs are called on to take urgent steps to consider students' experiences when providing on-campus and private off-campus residences (Macintyre, 2010; DHET, 2018).

2.5.2 Private off-campus residence

The Report of the Ministerial Committee for the Review of the Provision of Student Housing at South African Universities (2011) defined off-campus privately owned residences as privately- owned units with a large number of rooms. The tertiary institution may lease individual rooms in a residence occupied by the home-owner or work through an accredited leasing agent. The difficulties that confront students who live private off-campus residences include distractions caused by social activities, undue interference in their daily lives, power cuts, noise and many more (Powell & Hall, 2012). Dominguez-Whitehead (2017) notes that many students at Majuba TVET College occupy inadequate private off-campus residences. The literature highlights the need for improved planning of student residences using sociological, geographical and economic tools. This calls for more analytical and empirical research on how to improve students' residences and thus, their academic performance (Agbola, 2015). Hence the importance of the findings of this study.

2.6 Design and effects of student residences on academic performance

The Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Residence Public Universities Policy (2015) notes that a residence is about more than simply providing beds; it involves creating communities that promote effective teaching and learning and thus, academic performance. The MNSFSH Report (2015) noted that there are widely varying standards for residences for university students across the public HE sector. Amongst other factors, lack of adequate food and nutrition, transport costs, and the cost of internet access were identified as challenges for students living in student residences. The Report also noted that there are few facilities for students with disabilities, including buildings and rooms, as well as bathroom facilities that can be accessed by those in a wheelchair (MNSFSH Report, 2015, p. 160). The minimum standards (Government Gazette, 1997) provide for a maximum of two students per room, bathing facilities, the provision of social and communal spaces, self-catering and non-self-catering facilities, and accessible resources. The MNSFSH Report (2015) also noted the need for compliance with health and safety

legislation and the need to obtain certificates of compliance. Given the above-mentioned design standards for student residences regulated in the South African higher education policy framework, the question of whether private off-campus student residences are also required to follow suite is important. This study considers the experiences of students who lived in private off-campus residences to provide insight into whether or not the design of these residences meets the standards and influences academic performance.

2.7 Funding and its influence on student residences

Most of the students who attend public TVET Colleges are from disadvantaged families, and cannot afford the fees (FET ROUND Table, 2010). The bursary scheme introduced by the DHET supports students registered for NCV programs and NATED programs. Franklin (2012) suggests that student support for private off-campus residences should be provided over and above the NSFAS support. Following the adoption of the National Plan for FET Colleges in December 2008, program-based funding linked to the NCV was introduced (DHET, 2011). The National Norms and Standards for funding of colleges only provided for the funding of NCV enrolment and not for residence support.

Kresge and Foundation (2012 p. 20) state that NSFAS is a “government scheme” that funds tuition at public universities and TVET colleges. It covers tuition, residence, living expenses and travel while the student is studying. Students need to be South African citizens to qualify and to show that they require financial assistance and have academic potential (DHET, 2013).

According to the DHET (2018), full-time registered students who meet the admission requirements need to complete and submit NSFAS application forms at their university’s finance office. Students are required to reapply every year. Students from households with an annual income of R300 000 or less are eligible, with the number of dependents also considered.

However, the National Plan for Higher Education (2009) noted that NSFAS does not consider the different costs involved in living in private off-campus residence. Furthermore, NSFAS funding has increased at a very slow rate. Delays in payment and escalating university fees together with the high cost of private residences and transport led to the 2016 and 2017 student protests and the “Fees must Fall Movement”. The extent to which the participants in this study experienced such financial frustrations is presented later in the dissertation.

2.8 Factors that influence the academic performance of students living in private off-campus residences

The literature identifies a number of factors that impact the academic performance of students living in private off-campus residences. These include their parents' income and marital status, being unfamiliar with local people, distractions and a lack of time management (Staten, 2016). According to Morgan and McDowell (2011), universities and colleges have a duty to inform low-income applicants and their parents of the funding available and how to access such.

Morgan and McDowell (2011) add that private off-campus residences where the genders are mixed and poor readiness for college negatively influence students' academic performance. The time and effort that students devote to learning and how institutions organize the curriculum as well as the resources provided can affect academic performance (National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), 1997). Higher Education Institutions should also be aware of the problems encountered by students with disabilities and cater for their needs (Howell, 2018).

Students that live off-campus face many difficulties in accessing college facilities and in bonding with the university community (NSSE, 1997). Coupled with difficulties in accessing college facilities, students are also limited in terms of their ability to join on-campus study groups and communities and are thus not able to socially construct their identities as HE students. This may in turn lead to challenges with the teaching and learning aspects of the curriculum. They might also confront more financial constraints than their counterparts who live in on-campus residences who don't pay for transport to access such facilities.

2.8.1 Negative Academic Impact on students living in private off-campus residences

Students who live in private off-campus residences cannot stay after lectures to participate in on-campus learning, including working with groups, attending special lectures and using the library as transport back to their residences is often not available after hours or they might run the risk of being robbed or attacked (Staten, 2016). Studies have found that such students tend to take more time to graduate, are less likely to register for postgraduate studies, and obtain lower year marks than students who reside in on-campus residences (Howell, 2018). Powell & Hall (2012) noted that a large number of students' experience physical stress and anxiety because of the distance between their own homes and the private residences that they have to live in once they attend college. This shift of living away from their families and homes takes them out of their comfort zones thereby affecting their focus on academic work. These individuals are also faced with the challenges of becoming independent and at the same time this may create a financial burden for their families who have to send money for their food and rent (Morgan & McDowell, 2011). According to Powell & Hall (2012) learners who are stressed and anxious about finances become less focused and committed to their studies and are unable to achieve outstanding results, because they tend to feel that they should be the ones providing for their families.

Another reason why students who live in private off-campus residences perform poorly is the pressure they experience from their peers about the quality of their residences. Franklin (2012) asserts that mainly women students tend to neglect their academic work and start focusing on how they can improve their private residences in order to fit in or afford a better lifestyle with fancy furniture and household appliances compared to other students living nearby. He further comments that lecturers should assist their students by discussing such social and personal development issues during class. This may lead to students refocusing on their academic performance rather than being influenced to compete with one another about who has a fancier residence. The discussion on the lack of social and personal development experienced by students who live off-campus follows.

2.8.2 Lack of Social and Personal Development

Students who live in private off-campus residences have less access to campus resources, and are less likely to engage in leadership activities (DHET, 2013) as well as interact socially with the campus community. According to Howell (2018), students who reside in on-campus residences are much more engaged in campus activities such as sports and cultural events. The DHET (2015) states that living in a community that offers the features of a diverse neighbourhood can make or break students in so far as understanding themselves and the diverse population that constitutes their neighbourhood. The DHET (2018) adds that the students who reside in private off-campus residences suffer from low self-esteem, and skewed values, are less understanding and are unhappy with their residential experiences. Furthermore, they are not included in programs and services that take place in on-campus residences to assist students to master life skills, understanding and tolerance, critical thinking, decision-making, and effective communication that promote personal and social development and prepare them for life after college (DHET, 2018).

2.8.3 Inconvenience and Poor Time Management

According to the DHET (2018), living off campus means that students have to set aside time to travel to campus and buy groceries, while those who live on campus have access to cafeterias, libraries, computer labs, busses and the internet to access resources. The DHET (2013) also observes that many private off-campus residences are old and not well maintained, there is no supervision, and municipal services are inadequate or expensive. According to Franklin (2012), few students who live off campus take advantage of academic support services like mentoring, and academic and personal counselling, and career workshops. The DHET (2013) adds that the lack of interaction and knowledge of services on campus

results in many students that live off campus being ineffective peer mentors since they have not been mentored themselves.

Access to technology is crucial to today's students. Most tertiary institutions offer high speed wireless connectivity in computer labs. Similar services are not readily available to those living in private off-campus residences and if they are, they tend to be costly (DHET, 2018). Private off-campus residences also lack security, raising safety concerns. It can thus be inferred that students living in private off-campus residences face many risks (Franklin, 2012). These include being exposed to risky and bad behaviour on the part of local residents (Franklin, 2012). In contrast, most tertiary institutions provide 24-hour security at on-campus residences (DHET, 2015).

2.9 The relationship between living conditions and academic performance

South African TVET colleges have been subject to intensive policy reform since 1998 when the first FET Act was passed (the Act was amended in 2006 and 2009 (REAP, 2010)). As noted previously, a strong TVET system offers high quality education in line with the demands of the practical world (McGrath, 2012). Rasool and Mahembe (2014) argue that the human capacity and sustainable development should underpin TVET policy on residence provision. The lack of sustainable development of housing infrastructure has given rise to the emergence of private off-campus residence facilities (DHET, 2011).

There are two schools of thought on the relationship between residence life and students' academic performance. The first identifies a positive association between these variables. Studies consistent with this viewpoint include those by REAP (2010), Rasool and Mahembe (2014), and the Kregse Foundation (2012). The second school of thought maintains that there is a negative relationship between residence life and student academic performance. Studies that support this perspective include those by Ruth et al. (2010), Howell (2018), the DHET (2011), Jones, Coetzee, Bailey and Wickham (2015), Omatayo (2010), and Thompson, Samiratedu and Rafter (2013). The findings of this study are in line with the latter school of thought.

McGrath (2012) found that there was a positive association between residence life and student academic performance in most African countries, while the Kregse Foundation's (2011) study in European countries reached the same conclusion, especially for at-risk students. The study found that students that reside on campus have a higher level of social integration and adaptability. Research by the DHET (2011) established that drop-out rates are particularly high among first-year students; they should thus receive priority in allocation of spaces in on-campus residence. Finally, Rasool and Mahembe (2014) concluded

that close proximity between living places and learning facilities produces quality graduates that are religiously and sports-inclined.

A substantial body of work agrees with the first school of thought (residence life, supported by REAP, 2010, Rasool & Mahembe, 2014, and the Kregse Foundation, 2011), while some studies focus on the impact of student residences. Thompson, Samiratedu and Rafter (2013) concluded that first-year students who live on campus have high pass rates, receive high marks and record sound academic performance. Pascarella, Bohr, Nora, Zusman, Inman and Desler (2013) noted that students that reside on-campus record better performance, especially in cognitive skills and critical thinking. This could be because quantifiable academic progress is not delayed. Given that the students who live on campus showed rapid growth in cognitive thinking skills, high levels of academic performance throughout their studies can be expected (Pascarella et al., 2013).

Pascarella et al. (2013) cited two possible factors to explain these findings. The first was that previous studies were somewhat outdated and related to problems that existed at the time they were conducted. Furthermore, some studies were conducted during the first semester when academic records were not available for first-year students. Secondly, other research studies failed to address self-selection problems. Flowers (2010) used instrumental variables to address possible self-selection problems and concluded that students who resided in on-campus residences recorded academic performance of an acceptable quality.

Pascarella and Terenzin (2014) add that the characteristics of both students and HE have changed over time. There have been shifts in students' cultural, ethical, and socio-economic characteristics as well as significant technological advances, and learning systems have matured. All these factors could explain why students that live in on-campus residences record high levels of academic performance, while those who live in private off-campus residences demonstrate poor academic performance (Pascarella et al., 2013)

Toutkoushian and Smart (2001) provide evidence that a rise in institutional spending improves students' academic performance. They also conclude that non-academic resources at TVET Colleges create an environment that nurtures learning and sound learning habits. These include information technology, college clubs, college sponsored exercise facilities, sports, and other extra-curricular activities. Few studies have examined this subject in South Africa (Ruth, Lopez & Geoffrey, 2010).

The second school of thought maintains that residence life and academic performance are negatively related. A DHET (2011) study concluded that the lack of student residences has had a negative effect on academic performance in South African HE (DHET, 2011). Jones et al. (2015) also found that one of the

reasons why students from disadvantaged backgrounds do not perform satisfactorily is their inability to access appropriate residences. One of the main reasons cited for TVET students' poor academic performance is their lack of financial resources to access decent private off-campus residences (Jones et al., 2015). Thompson et al. (2013) also concluded that some undergraduates from poor socio-economic backgrounds in the UK are unable to afford decent residences. While Jones et al. (2015) agree that such students are most affected; financial challenges may cut across socio-economic levels. Given that students also have to come up with tuition fees, many settle for low-priced private off-campus residences where they endure poor living conditions (Jones et al., 2015). Such difficulties are particularly severe for students from rural areas who arrive in an unfamiliar environment with little information on how to manage their monies for the duration of their studies. Some lack funds for basics like textbooks, residence, food, transport and equipment (Thompson et al., 2010).

Jones et al. (2015) note that, adapting to private off-campus residences is particularly challenging for NATED N4 and NCV level 2 students. It is difficult to transition from a supervised and disciplined school environment to the TVET environment where students are expected to be independent. Thompson et al. (2010) concluded that students from disadvantaged backgrounds often perform poorly because they lack self-discipline and time management skills.

In South Africa, access to residence and finance are the most significant factors that determine students' academic performance (Jones et al., 2015). According to the DHET (2011, p.30), decent, accessible, safe and convenient student residences are crucial in promoting student success. The number of students admitted to South African TVET Colleges increased from 25 000 in 1998 to more than 180 000 in 2010. As a result, both on-campus and off-campus residences are overcrowded, with some students squatting in other students' rooms. Such conditions are not conducive to good health, and also result in poor academic performance (Omotayo, 2010). Research conducted by the DHET (2013) revealed that students living in on-campus residences performed approximately 5-6% better than those staying in private off-campus residences. The reasons identified by Omotayo (2010) include disturbances in private off-campus residences ranging from interference to gossip, noise, and house parties; and interrupted power supply; shortage of water; lack of facilities; and poor time management.

Omatayo (2010) noted that the government and TVET College management need to address the residence issues faced by students at these colleges. An integrated, collaborative support system should be adopted to maximize student success (Jones et al., 2015). Students from disadvantaged backgrounds have been found to have poor participation and success rates because of the difficulty of securing conveniently located private off-campus residences. Ruth, Lopez and Geoffrey (2010, p. 399) observe that, while the various influences that impact on middle-class students equip them to cope, disadvantaged students

experience a disjuncture between educational institutions, family and friends. Jones et al. (2015) note, those feelings of loneliness and isolation can undermine a student's academic performance. They add that students who live in private off-campus residences may struggle with their studies since they have no guidance from their parents and mentors. The findings of this study contribute to the above literature on relating living conditions to the academic performance of TVET students from the South African perspective.

2.10 Chapter conclusion

Overall, the literature reviewed in this chapter points to a significant, positive relationship between living in on-campus residences and students' academic performance, especially for at-risk students. Studies have also shown that students who live in on-campus residences enjoy improved social integration and are more adaptable. Some studies have concluded that proximity between living spaces and learning facilities produces quality students that are religiously and sports-inclined.

However, some studies report mixed findings, while others postulate that students who live in on-campus residences and those living in private off-campus residences do not exhibit differences in terms of academic performance. Only a few studies have argued that a negative relationship exists between living in private off-campus residences and students' academic performance. Students that live in private off-campus residences have been found to be the most vulnerable to social problems at TVET Colleges, leading to increased drop-out rates, especially among first-year students. This raises the question of who should be prioritized in the allocation of campus residence spaces.

While numerous studies have investigated the challenges faced by students that reside in private off-campus residences, there is a paucity of research on how TVET Colleges handle the challenges of providing residences to their students. The current study aimed to contribute to filling this gap by investigating the relationship between students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and academic performance at Majuba TVET College.

Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical framework adopted for this research study.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework that informed this study. It discusses the theories of Cultural Capital, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Effective Teaching and Learning and Housing Productivity. Drawing on tenets from each theory, the overall framework guided how the research problem was viewed, as well as data production and analysis.

3.2 Theory of Cultural Capital

Weuqinger and Annette (2003, p. 133) define cultural capital as 'the assets that enable social mobility'. It is comprised of three categories: 'institutionalized (education); embodied (personality, speech skills); and material assets (clothes and other belongings)' (Weuqinger & Annette, 2003, p 133). Salulberg and Oldroyds (2010) note that educational capital is an essential structure of cultural capital. For example, upper-class parents have high levels of well-being and have everything they need, middle-class parents are educated with good qualifications and lower-class parents are less educated due to their circumstances. Pishghadam (2011, p. 25) thus defined 'cultural capital as individuals' access to different cultural facilities such as the internet, computers, pictures, paintings, libraries, books and dictionaries.

Agbola (2015) defines cultural capital as the understanding, behavior and skills that enable a person to establish her/his social status or standing in society. He adds that such capital strengthens class differences since, during historical and modern times, different groups of people have access to different sources and forms of knowledge, depending on variables like 'race, gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, religion, and even age' (Agbola, 2015, p. 30). Cultural capital is also context specific. South Africa has a historically divided past due to the apartheid system. While the democratic constitution advocates for equality and equity for all, due to the past imbalances, these ideals have yet to be attained. It is within this context of social, cultural and economic inequality that this study was located.

I drew on Bourdieu's (1977 p. 140) theory of cultural capital that illustrates the essential relationship between 'cultural capital, social capital, economic capital and habitus. Bourdieu (1998c) viewed economic, cultural and social capital as the three fields in the social space in which social action takes place and in which the education system is produced and reproduced. These concepts laid the foundation to analyze the relationship between TVET College students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and their academic performance at Majuba College in Northern KwaZulu-Natal. Bourdieu (1977) defined habitus as a set of acquired patterns of thoughts and behaviors. He viewed it as history

which replays itself in the present. Sullivan (2012) asserts that habitus is a set of attitudes and values and the dominant habitus is the set held by the dominant class.

In the context of a TVET College in northern KwaZulu-Natal, many students come from low socio-economic backgrounds and have little choice but to live in private off-campus residences. They are further restricted in their choice by virtue of their financial status. Living in private off-campus residences located in the poor surrounding communities is a stark contrast to the education and training milieu at the TVET College that is predominately middle-class and upper-class to a certain extent. How the participants in this study negotiated these two worlds is discussed later in the dissertation.

Lareau and Weininger (2010) observed that the theory of cultural capital views culture as a resource that is often monopolized and conveyed from one generation to the next. This implies that lower-class students that are not well represented in the curriculum and cannot afford decent residences struggle to cope with cultural values that are predominantly middle-class and upper-class. The extent to which the TVET curriculum serves this agenda has been critiqued by student activists who called for the ‘decolonization of the curriculum’ in the recent student protests in South Africa.

Middle and upper-class children’s parents are better able to assist them with their school work. Furthermore, such children are usually encouraged to pursue higher education. Middle and upper-class parents are also likely to be able to afford better education and residence facilities for their children. Merenuoto (2012) highlighted that cultural capital is a pre-eminent factor in students’ performance. The author added that lower-class students often receive less attention than those from better-off backgrounds. This study also focused on the extent to which social class and other factors influence the experiences of students living in private off-campus residences as well as their academic performance.

3.3 Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (2013, p. 40) is a motivational theory ‘comprising a five-tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid’. From the bottom up these needs are: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization. While the Hierarchy of Needs has been updated (Maslow 1943, 1954, 2013), it has retained its original structure.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow (2013) suggested that when particular needs are not met, this triggers particular behavioral patterns. Franken (2001) notes that, Maslow stated that some needs took priority over others. For example, if a person has no shelter, he/she has no food. Thus, lower level needs take precedence over higher level ones and must be satisfied first. When a need is satisfied, the person moves

to the next level of needs. The theory thus explains the motivation for certain forms of behavior. In this study, the pyramid is useful to establish whether students who live in private off-campus residences have unsatisfied needs in the hierarchy's first four levels. If their residence is not a satisfactory place to rest, they focus on the most basic physiological needs. This means that, in turn, they don't satisfy the safety needs on the second level of the pyramid.

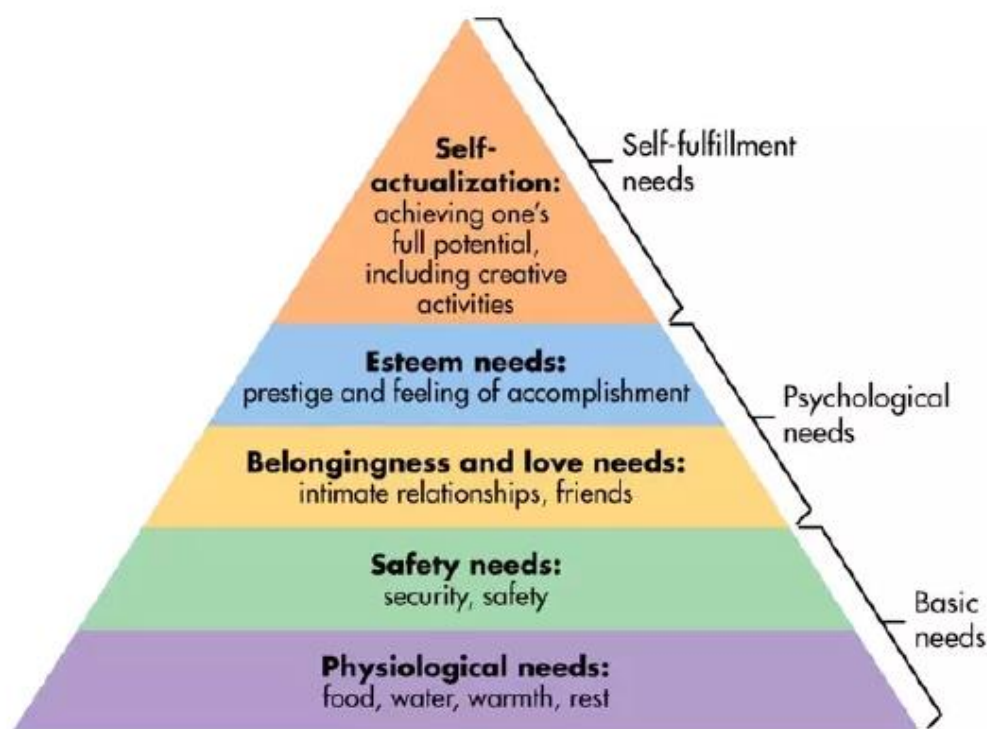


Figure 1: MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS (2013, p. 10)

Given that the level one basic need (physical needs) must be met before a person can move to higher levels, physical needs motivate human behavior. They are a biological requirement for human survival and include food, clothes, accommodation and adequate money. Thus, student residences are a basic need and one of the primary factors that may affect students' performance (Maslow, 2013). If this first level of need is unsatisfied they may feel ill, irritated, and uncomfortable, with negative impacts on their academic performance. While other TVET Colleges and HEIs provide on-campus residences, Majuba TVET College students reside in private off-campus residences that may not satisfy their basic need for shelter. However, if they are able to find a satisfactory place to stay, their performance could be positively affected as they will be able to satisfy other needs and move up the levels of the pyramid.

The second level in the hierarchy of needs relates to safety needs that invoke feelings of stability, and protection. Everyone needs to feel safe and secure where they live. Safety also includes job security, a safe work environment, income security and for students in particular, structure and order in their lives. They need to feel that their future is secure.

The third level of needs, social needs that involve belongingness and love, are also important to students. Students need to feel that they are connected to their peers, lecturers and the broader college community. They need to feel that they are part of a group, be it a family, educational, religious or social one. This creates a sense of acceptance, love and togetherness. Jones et al. (2015) state that Maslow noted that failure to fulfill these needs results in loneliness and social anxiety.

In the fourth level, Maslow identified the need for lower and higher levels of self-esteem. The former relate to respect from others for one's status, fame, glory, recognition, attention, reputation, appreciation, dignity, or even dominance. Esteem needs are also known as respect and self-respect. Respect from others is essential. All people need to feel recognized and when students perform better they are better respected by their lecturers and peers. Self-respect stems from feelings of efficiency, independence and self-confidence, resulting in a sense of self-worth and status. Higher self-esteem needs include self-respect, which stems from confidence, competence, achievement, mastery, independence, and freedom. Self-respect is more difficult to lose than respect from others. Low self-esteem and an inferiority complex are the opposite of these needs. Franklin (2012) notes that Maslow concurred with psychologist Alfred Adler that a lack of self-esteem causes many psychological issues.

Self-actualization is at the top of the hierarchy of needs and involves person's desire to fulfill his/her potential to become what he/she wants to be by applying knowledge and skills. For students, self-actualization occurs when their dreams come true, e.g., by attending their graduation ceremony. As the student traverses all the lower levels, she/he gradually becomes the best she/he can be by developing the ability to perform better, taking on challenges, helping others in their learning and allowing his/her creativity to blossom.

3.4 The concept of Housing Productivity

Agbola et al. (2010, p. 105) define housing productivity as 'the optimum point between housing and other investments where the marginal contribution of housing investment to national income equals the decrease in the contributions of alternative sectors, resulting from an addition in housing'. Morgan and McDowell (1979) developed this concept in the US in the early 1960s (Merrill et al., 2006d).

The DHET and the private sector have been called on to finance student housing at the various HEIs in South Africa. Housing productivity highlights student housing's attributes and social life (Agbola, 2015). Merrill et al. (2010d) argue that an increase in both the quantity and quality of student housing results in improved academic performance. I therefore argue that the government and the private sector should invest more money in student residences. At Majuba College, housing construction on campus would benefit students and society as a whole (Owalabi-Merus, 2015). It is challenging for students to move from their home to a HEI. They thus need to find a suitable residence in a good environment (Adu-Gyanfi, 2014). Most students living in private off-campus residences cannot take on additional responsibilities. For instance, the student has to study, clean the place, ensure that s/he pays the bills for rental, water and electricity, and buy groceries, etc. Students living in on-campus residences are not required to take on these responsibilities but can focus on their academic work. Anderson (2010) notes that, given the established association between student residences and academic performance, HEIs need to build more on-campus residences to meet increased demand for student housing. The findings of this study will shed more light on this issue.

3.5 Effective Teaching and Learning

Learning is defined as 'the acquisition of knowledge and skills through experience, practice, study or by being taught' (Cambridge Dictionary, 2011 p. 120). Guthrie, Coddington, and Wigfield (2009, p.56) defined learning as 'a relatively lasting change in behavior that is the result of experience'. The emergence of behaviorism focused psychologists' attention on learning. John B. Watson (1913) and B.F. Skinner (1904-1990) noted that, 'behaviorism is derived from the belief that free will is an illusion.' Behaviorists hold that people are shaped by their external environment; thus, changes in this environment will alter a person's thoughts. Behaviorists define learning as nothing more than the acquisition of new behavior based on the environmental conditions. Students are impacted by different behavioral patterns within the educational environment such as anxiety, fear of failure, a phobia about school and other issues. Educators also reward and punish students based on their behavior. Pavlov (1849-1936) and Skinner (1990) view 'learning as an adaptation to stimulus' (Atay, Kaslioglu, & Kurt, 2010 p. 273). Mahlomaholo (2012, p. 110) argues that 'learning in a sustainable environment is the most effective, resulting in improved productivity'. He concludes that the learning environment is not purely physical and includes economic, social, cultural and behavioral dimensions (Mahlomaholo, 2012).

Therefore, a conducive learning environment promotes respect, trust and validation of students and rests on the principles of equity, social justice, freedom, peace and hope. The concept of sustainability refers to 'a balanced society, economy and environment for current and further wealth' (Mear, Singh, Kendall,

Taylor, Hollis, Batty & Keenan, 2010, p. 2). Responsible management of resources in all three spheres is necessary in order to cater for the needs of future generations.

Perennialism, which has its roots in Greek philosophy (Robert Hutchins & Mortimer Adler, 1960), teaches students to think rationally and to question facts. The Greek philosophers believed that provoking discussion on different topics enabled students to solve any problem. This is a useful approach that would empower students to tackle problems that they encounter without affecting their academic performance when living in private off-campus residences. Accordingly, this study sought to determine whether the participants were able to respond to their challenges when it comes to living in private off-campus residences with a view to becoming independent and responsive to changing times.

John Dewey a progressive philosopher in the 1920s argued that, education should serve students' needs and interests. Not only did he believe in change, but he welcomed it. He noted that people are social animals who learn through interplay with others and that learning increases when they engage in activities that are meaningful to them. Tinto (1973) explains that the Student Integration Model seeks to integrate the student socially and intellectually into their new life, as this will assist them to complete their studies. Tinto described the factors that affect students following admission as 'integration' variables. Integration brings together students' attitudes and values, the social aspects of student life, academic life and HEIs' goals. The Student Integration Model (1997) links students' pre-registration experience, their family background and their skills and abilities to their HE experiences, and ultimately their performance and educational outcomes. Key explanatory factors include students' goals, dedication, and college experiences, academic issues, social problems, and effective teaching and learning. Thus, living in private off-campus residences is likely to affect students' integration into academic life. Their commitment to learning as well as social inclusion, enhance such integration. Tinto (1973) found that well-integrated students are more likely to do well in terms of all measures of performance. He also found that students who value their educational experiences and are satisfied with the opportunities available to improve their performance are more likely to be academically integrated and hence, likely to demonstrate higher levels of commitment.

Scheiber, Luescher-Mamashela and Moja (2014) also observed that financial support, whether in the form of parental assistance or state support such as funding from the NSFAS, enhances student commitment. A lack of financial support is thus likely to negatively impact student commitment and consequently, performance. Finally, residence status can also influence students' commitment to their studies. Living in private off-campus residences or on-campus residences that do not offer conducive conditions for studying is likely to undermine such commitment. Therefore, this study sought to determine how living in

private off-campus residences influenced students' commitment to teaching and learning and ultimately their academic performance.

All four theories form a cyclical relationship with each other and also impact the academic performance of students living in off-campus private residences.

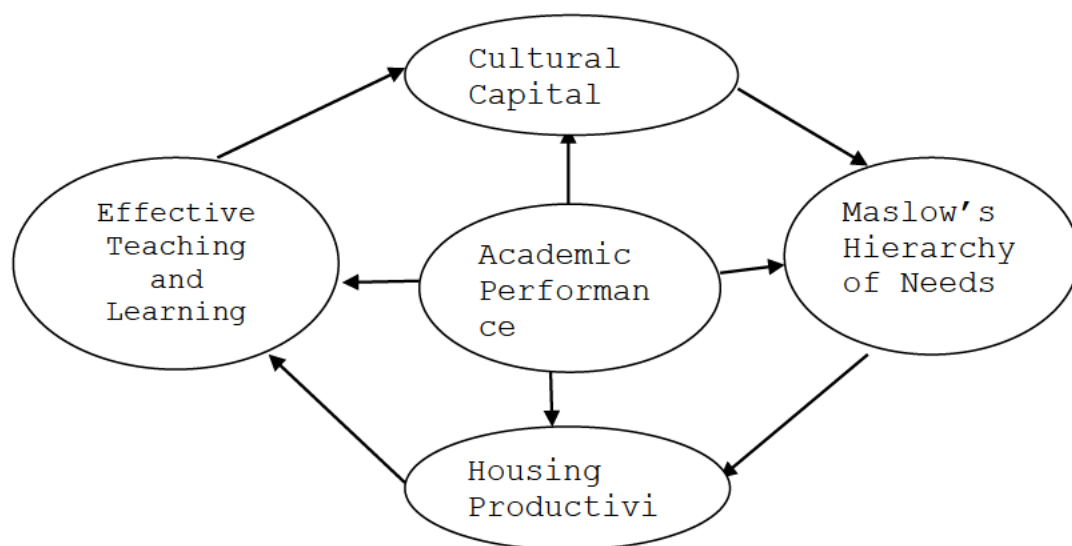


Figure 2: Cyclical relationship of the four theories and how they impact academic performance
(Compiled by researcher)

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the theoretical framework that underpinned this study. It discussed the theory of cultural capital, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Effective Teaching and Learning and Housing Productivity and showed how these theories provided the lenses through which to investigate how the participants' experiences of living in private off-campus residences related to their academic performance.

The following chapter discusses the research methodology and design employed to conduct the study.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Design

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology employed to conduct this study. It discusses the research design and paradigm, the population and sample, and data collection and analysis strategies. The chapter also highlights the trustworthiness and the integrity of the results. The ethical considerations are also presented.

This study involved a narrative investigation using two focus groups, each comprising of ten participants living in private off-campus residences. In-depth interviews were also conducted with ten participants. Creswell (2014) describes such an investigation as a form of qualitative research with a detailed focus on the views and experiences of individuals. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2014) note that official documents are also an important data source. Documents served as a primary data source in this study. Clandinin and Connelly (2018 p. 9) state that ‘a story review is a cushion term for an inquiry that captures the social, individual and personal dynamics of life experiences over time, taking into consideration the relationship between such experiences and the cultural context’. This is in line with the current study since the aim was to understand how the participants’ experiences of living in private off-campus residences related to their academic performance at the TVET College.

Riley and Hawe (2005) observe that a narrative investigation focuses on how individuals talk about their experiences and whose viewpoints they draw on to make sense of such experiences. This may become apparent in how and when they introduce particular events, how tension is represented and how decisions are carried out. Dane (2010) highlights that interpretivist approaches examine a social phenomenon by means of an array of spoken and written scripts that provide insight into how personal understanding is shared, knowledge is diffused, memories are passed on, and testimony is built. The role of narratives in this qualitative study was to produce data that tells the story of human experiences by sharing memories and knowledge, and to provide testimonies on the participants’ life experiences as well as the conditions that impeded or enhanced their academic performance. The focus was thus on the participants’ interpretations of residence related factors that obstructed or improved their chances of accessing and effectively participating in technical and vocational education and training at Majuba TVET College.

According to Atkinson and Delamont (2016), in qualitative research, narratives are used to create a holistic story from the bits and pieces of information provided by key people on factors that disturbed the smooth flow of human socio-economic and educational activities. Story-telling and story-hearing therefore offer a meeting ground to deepen links, and promote understanding and communal learning.

Atkinson and Delamont (2016) note that narratives are prevalent in everyday life. They are also prevalent in contemporary educational practices at TVET Colleges in South Africa. Given their pervasiveness in educational and social spheres, narratives are amongst the main vehicles for social investigations. They represent an effective and robust approach to gather information on the socio-economic challenges that the narrators experience on a daily basis. This study was interested in participants' daily experiences of living in private off-campus residences and how those related to their academic performance.

Adopting a qualitative approach, I documented the participants' experiences of participating in programs at the college, including the residence related factors that affected their academic performance. The analysis of their private off-campus residence experiences enabled an understanding of why some students achieved good academic performance, while others failed to participate effectively in the college's learning programs. The TVET College Technical Task Team (CTTT) (2014) reiterated that the study of narratives is not restricted to the narration itself, but that narratives are entrenched in interactional and organizational settings. Thus, the use of narratives in this study assisted me to understand the financial, socio-cultural and academic factors that hindered the participants' academic performance in a TVET College in northern KwaZulu-Natal.

4.2 Research Paradigm: Interpretive Research Paradigm

According to Bertram and Christensen (2014, p. 22), a research paradigm is the worldview that informs a research project, while Kawulich and Garner (2012 p. 54) state that 'a paradigm includes the opinions which guide our beliefs, thinking and assumptions about ourselves and society at large and frame how we assess the world around us'. Saunders et al. (2013 p. 103) offer two perspectives on a paradigm: 'The first is that it is a particular way of thinking that is common to a community of scientists in solving problems in the field, and the second is that it represents the beliefs, commitments, methods, values and outlooks shared across a discipline'.

The current study adopted an interpretive research paradigm. In social research, interpretative studies employ qualitative methods, with unstructured interviews or participant observation used to gather data. Interpretivists argue that in order to understand a person's actions, 'we are required to reach an understanding in order to see the world through the eyes of the actors doing the acting' (Cohen et al., 2013, p. 23). This is vital since the interpretivist research paradigm seeks to uncover the way in which the world is organized (Bertram and Christensen, 2014). For example, the literature points to uneven distribution of future prospects between undergraduate students from advantaged and disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. In examining how living in private off-campus residences influences the academic performance of students registered at Majuba TVET College, it was therefore necessary to

consider the participants' socio-economic backgrounds. Furthermore, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) note that the purpose of interpretive studies is not simply to understand or describe, but to transform society to become more just. Thus, based on the study's findings, I make recommendations to improve the living conditions and possibly the academic performance of Majuba TVET students living in private off-campus residences.

The interpretive paradigm is distinguished 'by a concern for the person where the central endeavor ... is to recognize the subjective world of personal experience' (Cohen et al., 2013, p. 40). Nieuwenhuis, Pieterse, Plano and Van der Westhuiszen (2012, p. 85) state that interpretivists assert that 'since reality is constructed in the mind and the mind depends on subjective knowledge, social inquiry is in turn value bound and value laden'. Similarly, Creswell and Potch (2017 p. 140) assert that 'people are creators of knowledge; there are thus fluctuating perceptions and understanding of a phenomenon, rather than the one only truth stressed by Positivists. They add that an interpretivist approach produces credible answers to research questions.

Creswell et al. (2013) notes that, while an interpretivist paradigm has both pros and cons, it enables rich, in-depth exploration of a phenomenon. Christiansen et al. (2010, p. 23) observe that an interpretive paradigm 'narrates how individuals make meaning of their world, and how they make meaning of their particular actions'. Thus, the researcher does not assume what participants will do or how they will behave. However, Creswell et al. (2010) add that the findings of interpretive studies cannot be generalized beyond the phenomenon under study. The current study did not aim to make generalizations, but to achieve in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and the extent to which this related to their academic performance. However, since it adopted a case-study design, its findings may be useful in similar contexts.

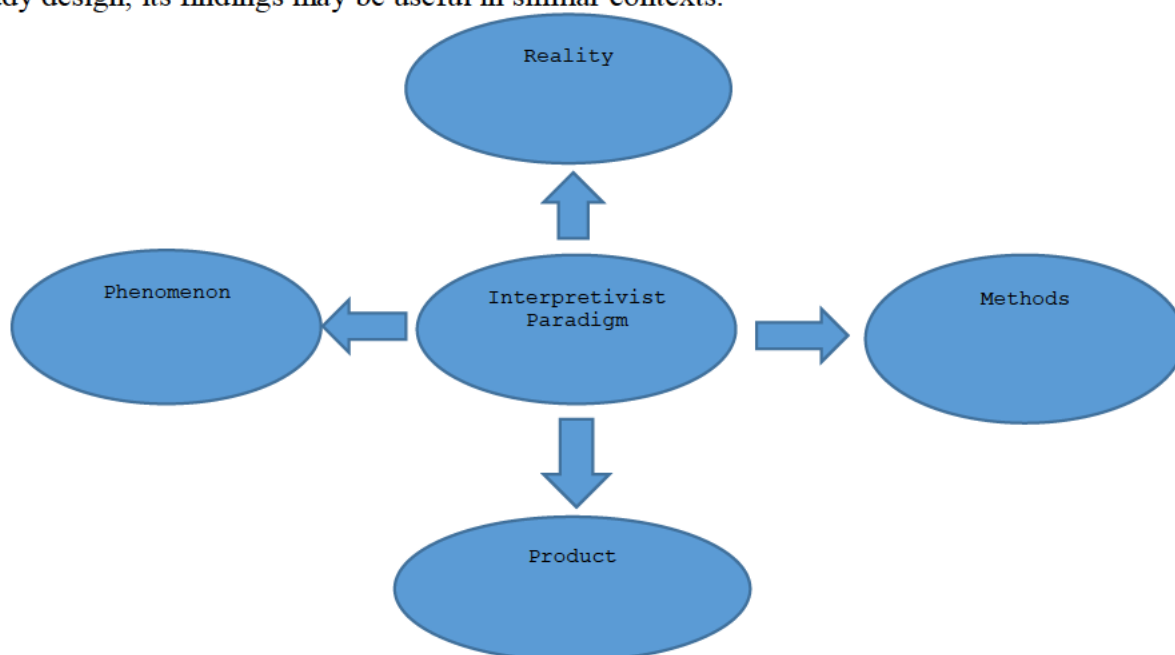


Figure 2: The Interpretivist Paradigm (Creswell, 2012, p.4)

The above figure shows that; interactive methods should be used when employing the interpretivist paradigm. This approach enabled me to understand the TVET College students' experiences from their perspective. It also assisted the participants to interpret their own experiences. According to Creswell et al. (2010, p. 59-60), the interpretive paradigm posits that, 'human life can be known from within; it focuses on how people construct understanding; social life is a human product; interacting with people helps to understand how they perceive things; mind is a source of meaning, ... [and] understanding happens as a result of in-depth exploration of a phenomenon'. Furthermore, 'human behavior is affected by knowledge of the social world; social theory increases acknowledging of things; and the social world does not exist independently from human knowledge; how they recognize and view things influences how they conduct what they do'. These tenets informed the current study's research questions.

The CTTT (2014, p. 8) notes that the 'interpretive paradigm comprises of theoretical assumptions in relation to three factors. The first is the 'nature of reality, which is also denoted as ontology, while the second is ways of knowing, also known as epistemology and the third is ethics, values and value systems, known as axiology'. Therefore, the term ontology should respond to the question: 'what is believed about the nature of reality? The term epistemology seeks a response to the question: how to know what is known? and finally, the term axiology challenges us to answer the question: what is believed to be true?' (CTTT, 2014, p. 8).

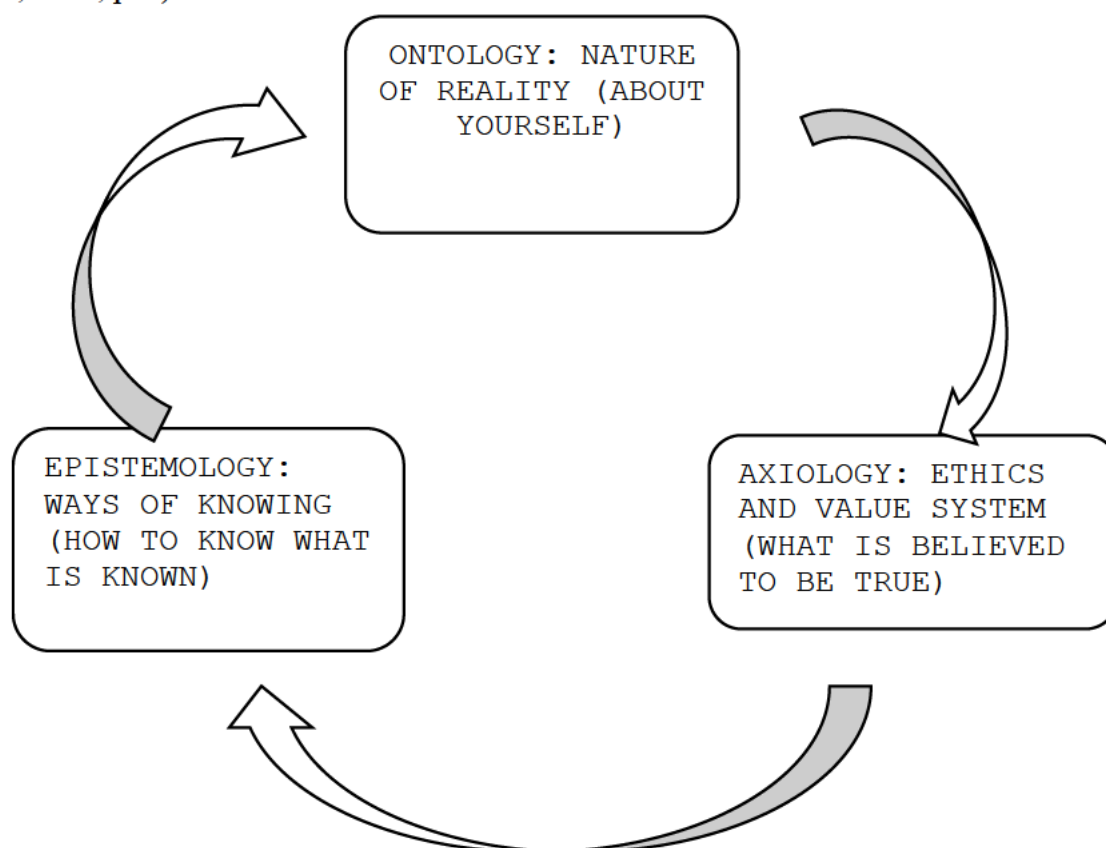


Figure3: TVET College Technical. Task Team (2014, p. 8)

In conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 20 participants from Majuba TVET College in northern KwaZulu-Natal, I sought to establish their ontological, epistemological and axiological realizing of the factors that affect their participation and academic performance, given their experience of living in private off-campus residences. The interviews and focus group discussions aimed to solicit the participants' experiences of real issues and their interpretation of how these experiences impact on their participation and academic performance at the college.

According to Kawulich and Garner (2012, p. 130), interpretivists hold that, due to changing socio-political and cultural factors, social reality is constantly transforming. Furthermore, they posit that reality is multi-layered and encompasses surface reality as well as deep structures. The former is observable while the latter are not. Researchers need to draw on theoretical and historical knowledge to bring the deep structures to the fore. For their part, students need to be aware of variations in their economic, social and educational environments so that they are in a position to address any problems. The interviews that I conducted produced information that was previously unseen in the participants' lives and educational experiences. Involving students in the research was a way of expanding their lenses with regard to issues that influence their view of reality based on residence experiences, knowledge and values from an interpretive point of view.

With reference to the question of ethics and values, that is, axiology, interpretivists regard research as a moral and political activity that requires that they commit to a value position (Kawulich & Garner, 2012). This implies that objectivity is achieved by carefully examining whether or not the researcher's personal values are appropriate to conduct the research. Careful analysis of the participants' responses helped me to differentiate between responses that would help to transform society and those that do not have the potential to liberate vulnerable segments of society from unjust social and economic practices in the education and training system.

The other reason for using an interpretive paradigm was that the intention was not to generalize the results. Rather, the aim was to gain an understanding of TVET College students' experiences in living in private off-campus residences (Creswell et al., 2010). I was aware of my subjectivity as a stakeholder in the TVET College system as this could have shaped the findings. To address this issue, the participants were encouraged to share their experiences and perceptions of living in private off-campus residences. The interpretive paradigm enabled them to interpret such experiences and the meaning they attached to them, resulting in trustworthy and authentic accounts of their behaviors. I attempted at all times to remain

unbiased (Christiansen et al., 2010) and ensured that the data presentation fairly represented the participants' views (Denzil & Lincoln, 2000). The data was produced over a long period of interaction with the participants (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010) and they were given sufficient time to freely express their own opinions.

4.3 Research Approach

Schreiber et al. (2014) describe a research design as the procedures employed by a researcher. Sekaran and Bougie (2010, p. 25-24) define a research design as 'the systematic procedures employed by a researcher to describe, explain and predict phenomena'. Atieno (2019, p. 13) identifies two types of research designs, namely, quantitative and qualitative. Qualitative research represents and establishes the meaning following data collection. Themes and generalisations characterise the concepts; words and images characterise the data; theory is largely inductive; and the data is organised to present a coherent and consistent picture. Beiter, Nash, McCrady, Rhoades, Linscomb, Clarahan and Sammut (2014) note that qualitative research is conducted in natural settings. Descriptive data is produced in the field and consists of words and pictures instead of statistics. In presenting the findings, the researcher may use direct quotations to illustrate and substantiate the presentation (Cohen et al., 2011). Qualitative researchers are concerned with processes rather than effects or products (Bertram & Christensen, 2014). Inductive analysis is usually used and they do not search for data to prove or disprove previously formulated hypotheses; rather, they build abstractions as the data produced is grouped together. Meaning making of experiences is the dominant concern in the qualitative research approach. Qualitative researchers are mainly concerned with the participants' perceptions. Due to these characteristics, a qualitative research design was appropriate to establish the relationship between students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and academic performance at Majuba TVET College.

Mcintyre (2010) states that qualitative research can also be employed to investigate whether an intervention has any effect. It enables in-depth investigation of individuals, groups and institutions in order to clearly and holistically understand the particulars of a case. In this study, I was the data-gathering instrument and I interacted with the participants in their natural setting. I was able to observe their actions while asking them about their experiences. Mouton (2007) and Bieter (2014) note that qualitative researchers record notes while in the field. Bieter (2014) adds that informal interaction could yield more reliable data than formal relationships where participants may be tense or behave artificially. He advises the qualitative researcher to proceed as if they know very little about the participants and place. I therefore presented myself to the participants in a way that was different from being an authority figure who they must obey or be intimidated by. It is also essential that the researcher identifies with the participants and learns from them in order to gain access to important information (Bieter, 2014).

The qualitative research design enabled me to evaluate the participants' opinions, behavior and attitudes (Meir, Newell & Pazer, 1989). Using in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis, I achieved an in-depth understanding of the issues that influenced the relationship between TVET College students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and their academic performance at Majuba TVET College in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Since the study was limited to the Majuba TVET College, a case-study approach was adopted.

4.4 Research Design: Case Study

Yin (2002, p. 1) maintains that case studies are conducted when the researcher aims to answer 'how and why questions. The author adds that a case study enables investigation of a 'contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not clear and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context' (Yin, 2002, p. 13). This approach enables a researcher to study a particular case in its own environment to find commonalities and differences and is relevant in facilitating exploration of the identified phenomenon (Yin, 2002). This was an appropriate approach for the current study as individual TVET Colleges present specific circumstances based on their environment and underlying issues. However, the findings from this study can assist other TVET Colleges that are located in similar contexts to understand the experiences of their students who live in private off-campus residences and how this may relate to their academic performance.

4.5 Sampling

A research sample is a 'group of people drawn from the population of elements on which information is required' (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008, p. 40). McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p.129) define a research sample as 'a select group of participants, representing the larger group or population, from whom data will be collected'. In a research study, the population differs from a country's population in that it refers to 'objects, subjects, phenomena or activities, on which the researcher wishes to, do research' (Babbie, 2011, p. 57) in order to unearth new information. In identifying the population for a research study, the researcher locates and combines elements such as 'people or social artifacts that share at least one specific characteristic relevant to the research question' (Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2016, p. 150).

Purposive sampling was used for this study since I did not intend to generalize the results outside of the sampled group. Saunders et al. (2013) note that, in this kind of sampling, the researcher seeks participants with certain characteristics. For this study, participants who were able to provide the most relevant

information in relation to the phenomenon under study were selected. The aim was to produce data that would address the study's critical research questions and objectives.

Having gained gatekeeper's permission to undertake the study, the Human Resource Management Department at Majuba TVET College granted access to the institution's Caltech System that maintains student records. A purposive sample was selected of 20 students who lived in private off-campus residences around the Majuba TVET College. They were put into two focus groups comprising of ten participants each. Each focus group comprised of five men and five women aged 19 to 31 and over. Of the 20 participants, ten had passed the NATED N4/NCV level 2 examinations the previous academic year (2018) and the other ten had failed the exam. For the in-depth interviews, 20 students that lived in private off-campus residences were selected, ten of whom had passed the examinations in 2018, and ten who had failed. The sample comprising of both students who passed as well as those who failed provided a variation of experiences that assisted in a better understanding of the relationship between living in off-campus residences and academic performance. The participants all resided in a local community surrounding the Majuba TVET College and were thus easily accessible. The reason for selecting students who passed and failed the NATED/NCV level 2 examinations was to produce data that would enable an understanding of the participants' experiences that encouraged or deterred successful participation in the TVET College's education and training programs.

4.6 Data Generation Strategies

Data collection techniques, which are part of a research design, provide a uniform structure for data production, with the same questions posed to all the respondents in the same order (Saunders et al., 2013). In-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis formed part of the data production strategy for this study. It was important to include in-depth questions as they assisted me to access the participants' narratives that spoke directly to their experiences of living in private off-campus residences and their academic performance. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and the transcripts were sent to the participants for member checking.

Siedman (2017, p. 20) observes that 'when people narrate stories, they choose characteristics of their experiences from a stream of consciousness'. Selecting characteristics, and ordering and making sense of them, enables meaning to emerge. This view is supported by Mears et al. (2010, p. 169) who posits that the 'story teller makes choices about what to share with interviewers and that these choices are based on perceived significance, with details provided or omitted to support the telling of the memory'. Thus, 'interviews offer access to the place where interpreted human experiences and responses intersect with an educational, social, cultural, spiritual or political dynamic, providing the means by which privately held

contents of memory can be communicated to the listening researcher' (Mears et al., 2010 p. 169). This enables information to be obtained in a friendly and amicable way.

4.6.1 In-depth Interviews

According to Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012), in-depth interviews are a common data collection method in qualitative research. Niewenhuis and Smit (2010), cited in Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012 p. 5) define in-depth interviews as a 'two-way conversation and a purposive interaction in which the interviewer asks the participant (the interviewee) questions in order to collect data on their ideas, experiences, beliefs, views, opinions and behavior'. Bryman (2012, p. 89) describes 'an interview as communication between two or more people with the main aim of sharing information on a specific topic'. McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p.205) regard 'in-depth interviews as vocal questionnaires, which ensure that one acquires all the information required to answer the questions'.

The participant should therefore do most of the talking in an interview. The disadvantage of interviews is that they are time consuming, while the advantage is that they 'enable participants to recount their experiences, and express their thoughts, feelings, views, and suggestions on the research topic' (Pachana & Laidlaw, 2014, p. 184). Bombano (2012, p. 35) notes that a further advantage of 'interviews is that they enable the researcher to use probing questions to obtain more from the interviewee'. In-depth interviews thus yield rich descriptive data that help the researcher to see the world through the eyes of the participant (Wagner, Kawulich & Garner, 2012).

Niewenhuis and Smith (2010) cited in Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012) comment that if the person being interviewed thinks that the topic is important and trusts the researcher, he/she will provide information which is not obtainable using other methods. Booyse, le Roux, Seroto and Wolhuter (2011) note that interviews allow one to obtain first-hand information from primary sources as eyewitnesses, as information is gathered from people who were involved in the event. This holds true for the participants in this study who were able to share their experiences of living in private off-campus residences and how those experiences related to their academic performance at Majuba College.

Mears et al. (2010) comment that, in-depth interviews broaden a researcher's understanding of the participants' experiences without the participants losing ownership of their life memories. However, conducting in-depth interviews is not without its challenges. According to Mears et al. (2010), a major challenge in researching life-changing events is investigating experiences without being intrusive and without negatively affecting participants who already feel victimized and misunderstood. The researcher should therefore, have sufficient background knowledge and empathy to create trust among the study

participants, build the genuine rapport required for successful interviewing and understand the ‘language of the experience in order to recognize the significance of what is being said by the narrator (Mears et al., 2010 p. 306). Establishing rapport is very important as successful interviewing requires that attention be paid to another person’s point of view. In-depth interviews have the advantage of flexibility as the questions can be changed or adapted as the interview progresses. However, they take time and are sometimes expensive, while the possibility of bias is a further challenge (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). The interviews for this study were conducted during the course of May 2019 and lasted an average of an hour each. They were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants after all other ethical matters were addressed such as informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality.

4.6.2 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions are defined as ‘direct discussion among five to twelve people with the purpose of generating in-depth qualitative data about people’s perceptions, attitudes, and experiences’ (Dane, 2010 p. 10). They typically consist of ten members with a moderator (usually the researcher) driving the discussion (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014; Harrell & Bradley, 2010). Focus group discussions save time and yield much information, as participants feel free when they discuss in a group. They produce quick results and are cost-effective. Focus groups also provide participants with opportunities to explore areas of disagreement learn from one another and resolve dilemmas (Dane, 2010). The group setting promotes full discussion of a topic and yields information that might be left out of an individual interview. However, Babbie and Mouton (2007) note that it can be difficult to record the entire discussion, resulting in the loss of pertinent information. Focus groups are commonly used to collect data for social research among people as in the case of this research.

In order for focus group participants to feel comfortable, the researcher needs to be sensitive to their social, economic and educational background (Gleisner, 1999, cited in Mears et al., 2010). In striving to establish trust, I engaged with the participants in a friendly manner, maintained eye contact and used language that was familiar to them (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014) that was IsiZulu. Mears et al. (2010) note that some participants may be too shy or lack confidence to state their views. The onus falls on the researcher to lead the discussion, put participants at ease and maintain an orderly atmosphere. I arranged for the participants to sit in a circle to promote dialogue and to ensure that they all had an opportunity to respond.

Some of the participants were inclined to dominate the discussion at times and I had to intervene to ensure that all had a chance to express their views. Each focus group discussion lasted one-and-a-half to two hours. I did both groups on one day with an interval of two hours between each group discussion. They were audio-recorded with the participants’ consent in order to listen to the pure source. Notes were

also taken during the focus group discussions although, Mears et al. (2010) caution that this can dampen discussion; thus, care was taken not to record too many notes. I assisted by my colleague to take notes while I was asking the participants the questions. Instead, the notes were supplemented after each discussion by listening to the recording.

Mears et al., (2010) add that participants should review both the transcripts of the interviews and focus group discussions and the researcher's interpretation of the data. This was critical to confirm the accuracy of the data and for the participants to use it to reflect on their life experiences.

4.6.3 Document Analysis

Document analysis was also used to produce data for this study. According to Cohen et al. (2011, p 206), 'documents include official documents, which provide direct evidence of decisions that are directly or indirectly related to the phenomenon under inquiry'. Bowen (2010, p. 10) defines document analysis as 'a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic'. It is a systematic procedure 'to examine and interpret documents in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge' (Corbin & Strauss, 2011 p. 200; Rapley, 2010, p 660). Atkison and Coffey (1997) cited in Bowen (2010, p. 13) comment that documents refer to the production, dissemination and use of 'social facts'. According to Bowen (2010), they include 'advertisements, agendas, attendance registers, minutes of meetings, manuals, books, brochures, diaries, journals, maps, charts, newspapers, press releases, and various public records' (Bowen, 2010, p. 13). The following documents were selected for analysis in this study: an attendance register, academic result sheet, the enrolment documents from COLTECH from 2017 to 2019, the NSFAS (2019) document, Majuba TVET policy and procedure (2019) document, enrolment document (2019), and student support service document (2019).

Bowen (2010) adds that documents are not used to verify or strengthen other data collection methods to support the findings, but assist in grounding a research study. They are easily accessible from institutions and the internet. Bowen (2010, p. 20) notes that documents are 'unobtrusive, non-reactive and stable' and are 'unaffected by the research process'. The researcher cannot interfere or change them; they are cheaper to access and best to use if new data is available.

Like other data, documents should first be analyzed and then interpreted (Henning et al. 2013). They are useful tools for theory building. Bowen (2010) highlights that some researchers do not support content analysis as they believe that it hinders interpretation in the case of interview transcriptions. However, it can be useful in document analysis as it simplifies information for easy handling by bringing out hidden meanings. It also involves breaking down data into small chunks, grouping and re-grouping similar ones,

and re-assembling them in such a way that sense and meaning is brought out and shared with others. Having read, analyzed and interpreted the documents, I selected the portions that pertained to the research questions.

Henning et al. (2017, p. 232-233) identify ‘common denominators of qualitative analysis methods and these are: reduction, organization, interpretation and substantiation of data’. They add that data analysis is demanding and challenging. Bowen (2013) also asserts that document analysis is not always precise and accurate and calls on researchers to be very careful when analyzing documents. Document analysis is often combined with other qualitative methods in order to achieve triangulation, that is, the use of more than one methodology to examine a phenomenon (Denzin, 1971, cited in Bowen, 2010). Multiple sources of evidence enable the identification of points of convergence and corroboration. By triangulating data, the researcher seeks to provide a ‘confluence of evidence that breeds credibility’ (Eisner, 1991, cited in Bowen, 2010). Corroboration of the findings across different sets of data reduces the effect of possible bias.

According to Patton (2010), triangulation helps the researcher to ensure that the findings do not emanate from a single method or source, or bias on the part of the investigator. I used attendance registers to establish the number of students registered for the NATED N4/NCV level 2 in any program in January 2017, NATED N5 NCV level 3 in January 2018 and NATED N6 and NCV level 4 in January 2019. An analysis of the differences between students who registered for NATED N4/NCV level 2 programs in January 2017 and those who remained in the education and training system enabled me to quantify academic performance and success rates in the TVET College. The private off-campus residence students were tracked using academic registers from the administration department, also called COLTECH. I also analyzed the TVET Colleges Policy and Procedures regarding residences, Majuba TVET College requirements for new students, the NCV and NATED policy document (2019), Majuba TVET NSFAS policy document (2019), and the Majuba TVET College Student Support Service (SSS) Policy (2019). While I used the most recent versions, the policies had not changed since 2016.

4.7 Data analysis strategy

Data analysis is ‘the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of data’ (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011, p. 397). According to Corbin Strauss (2010, p.480), it involves the researcher’s understanding and interpretation of events as related by participants. For the purposes of this study, quotes were copied verbatim. I read the data many times and coded it guided by the theoretical framework that encompassed three domains, namely, cultural, social and academic. The main aim of the analysis was to brainstorm patterns, and to identify various terms and themes in order to attach meaning

to them (DU Plooy-Cilliers at al., 2014, p. 241). The analysis followed the constant comparative method recommended by Chindaya (2010, p.71-72):

‘Step 1: Conducting the interview, recording it and reflecting on it in writing immediately after the interview (writing field notes, comments and memos);

Step 2: Transcribing data verbatim immediately after the interview and placing additional comments in brackets;

Step 3: Reading through the data and coding it according to emerging categories;

Step 4: Unitizing the data and identifying units of meaning in the context of the research questions and the topic;

Step 5: Identifying provisional categories and sub-categories (the phenomenon represented by a category is given a conceptual name) and matching unitized data cards to a category;

Step 6: Refining categories and compiling a list of key items (main ideas), words or phrases. Conducting a literature check to confirm whether the participants’ responses during the interviews bear some similarities to the research topic and what other participants concluded in similar studies. This is a final check for validity’.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim. An audio recording is ‘credible to the extent that it facilitates both collection and analysis of data as preconceived ideas are thus discarded’ (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p.127). The data was analyzed on an on-going basis throughout the research period, followed by inductive analysis to identify the emergent themes. Patton (2011, p.453) notes that, ‘inductive analysis entails discovering patterns, themes and categories in the data’. In contrast, in deductive analysis, ‘analytic categories are stipulated beforehand, according to an existing framework’. Using the constant comparative method (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 135), the first step was a quick read of the data to gain a preliminary impression of the recurrent themes/categories. At this stage, the aim was to utilize the data “to think with”. This was followed by intensive re-reading of the responses.

‘Reading, rereading and reading again through the data once more (a process often referred to as immersion in the data)’ enabled me to become intimately familiar with it (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p.158). This helped to avoid the trap of reaching hasty conclusions and overlooking material that did not fit my expectations or prior assumptions (Flick, 2010, p.225). As recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2011, p.199), I constantly asked questions and made comparisons in order to deepen the analysis. As

categories and themes were developed and coding was at an advanced stage, I started the process of interpretation. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011, p.161-162), 'interpretations bring meaning and coherence to the themes, patterns and categories and develop linkages and a story line that makes sense and is engaging to read'.

Given the open-ended questions in the interviews, I considered the categories suggested by the questions, as well as new categories based on the theoretical framework. These were merged with the categories from the collected data; hence, open coding was employed to undertake a detailed examination of the interviews and personal diaries. 'The process of generating categories and the themes demanded heightened awareness of the data, focused attention on it, and openness to subtle, tacit under currents of social life' (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 158 – 159). Prolonged engagement with the data led to the emergence of categories that augmented those suggested by the interview questions. This involved noting the patterns that emerged from the setting and from the participants' views.

The data obtained by means of observation were analyzed based on the steps described by McMillan and Schumacher (2010, p. 331) and Marshall and Rossman (2010, p. 201-209), which enable the identification of repetitive themes or categories. Finally, the themes were integrated, cross validated and compared with those that emerged from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, after which they were synthesized into a descriptive analysis. The findings are presented in the subsequent chapters.

4.8 Ethical Issues

Ethics have to do with being able to distinguish between good from bad. Resnik (2011 p. 11) notes that, 'the common denominator of ethics is normative behavior, that is, behavior that is acceptable'. Sekaran (2013, p. 36) describes ethics as a 'set of moral principles that an individual is expected to follow'. Sekaran (2013, p. 101) adds that 'research ethics refers to [the] moral and professional code of conduct that regulates standards and behavior'. The researcher must ensure that his/her research is conducted in an ethically acceptable manner. This also helps to ensure that the research findings are universally acceptable.

McMillan and Schumacher (2014, p. 118) note that 'participants should not be bound to participate in a research study, but should do so voluntarily and should be free to withdraw at any time'. Sekaran (2013) observes that many research studies deal with highly sensitive and confidential issues and that the researcher should act in an honest and humble manner. I respected the rights of the research participants and recognized that their contexts were different from mine. While access to public information is a human right (South African Bill of Rights Chapter 2; Education Act 108:1996), this should not be abused

or misused to further particular agenda. I thus treated the college information with extreme caution and confidentiality in order to avoid anyone being victimized.

Do no harm

The study participants were assured that that they would not be involved in any situation that could cause them harm. At no time did I mentally, psychologically or physically harm the participants. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process and pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the participants. Strict procedures were adopted to ensure the security of the data. The findings were presented to the participants to establish if their perspectives were represented accurately in the research.

Privacy and anonymity

Pseudonyms were used for all the participants to protect their identity. (Bill of Rights, Section 9 (3)). Anonymity was assured by not sharing the participants' responses with anyone except the research supervisor. Currie and De Waal (2013) state that research participants have the right to dignity, information and privacy. I was cautious about reproducing long verbatim quotes, especially if they were critical of the institution as this could have adverse repercussions for the participants. The participants were informed not to disclose any information about one another.

Informed consent

Christiansen et al. (2010) note that prospective participants should be informed about the nature and purpose of the research study. Cohen et al. (2011), Durrheim and Painter (2012), Rocher, and Murat (2004) highlight the need for the researcher to reach consensus with participants prior to involving them in a research study. Kawulich and Garner (2012) add that prospective participants should have the right to refuse to participate and should be informed of their right to withdraw at any stage of the research.

The participants were informed of the nature of the study and that participation was optional. They were also assured of their right to withdraw at any time with no adverse consequences. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Ethics Committee and permission to conduct the study was granted by the DHET and the Majuba TVET College Rector.

4.9 Credibility of the Research

According to Creswell et al. (2014), research findings are deemed credible when the participants have an opportunity to read the transcripts and the findings and make comments. They add that the research approach should always promote trustworthiness. The participants were given an opportunity to read the findings and my interpretations, and make any necessary corrections.

Trustworthiness

According to Creswell (2012) trustworthiness is achieved when the findings reflect participants' reality and when similar results would be obtained in similar settings. Trustworthiness is the bedrock on which the success or failure of a research study rests (Resnik, 2012). The researcher should be knowledgeable and abide by expected behavior. According to Guba and Lincoln (1989 p. 230) 'a fair interview should be fruitful to participants to gain knowledge by learning something during the research study'. To promote trustworthiness, the participants were requested to read the draft transcripts and the findings to verify their authenticity. Guba (1981 p. 105) identifies four aspects of trustworthiness, namely, the data is free from bias (verify), similar results would be obtained in similar contexts (consistency), the findings can be applied to other factors and settings (applicability), and the findings reflect human experiences as they are lived and perceived (trust). The trustworthiness of the research results was enhanced by integrating the recordings of the interviews and focus group discussions with my notes.

Credibility of the study

The credibility of a study refers to the confidence in the truth of the data and how this data has been interpreted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There are several methods that can be considered to ensure such credibility of the data such as continuous involvement with participants, consistent monitoring of their behavior as they engage in the interviews as well as the use of many methods to collect data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study credibility of the data was ensured through the prolonged engagement with the participants where I was able to gain their trust and learn the culture that they adopted as students who were living in off-campus private residences. During data generation, I spent at least two hours with each of the participants until data saturation was eventually reached. Some of the other strategies that I adopted included writing down field notes and observing the participants' behaviors during the interviews.

Transferability

This is the process where the research findings can be applied to other similar contexts other than where the original investigation took place (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the case of this study, the findings can be applied to other TVET Colleges and higher education institutions where on-campus residences are not provided and students are forced to seek private off-campus residences for the duration of their studies. Transferability also refers to the wider relevance of one's inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Dependability

This refers to the “consistency and reliability of the research findings and the degree to which research procedures are documented, allowing someone outside the research to follow, audit, and critique the research process” (Guba 1981:80). Dependability was ensured in this study through the detailed description of how the data was generated, the type of data that was produced and by giving a robust description of the methodology used.

Conformability

This means that the data is a true reflection of the participants' experience, not the researcher's speculations or imaginations (Polit & Beck, 2014). In other words, the findings of the research should be the product of the focus of the inquiry and not the researcher's biases. To ensure conformability in my study, an electronic recorder was used during the interviews and focus group discussions to get a true reflection of the participants' experiences. I also followed a systematic methodology to generate the data, manage it during the analysis right up until the write up of how the conclusions were reached.

4.10 Limitations of the study

This study was limited to 20 participants from one TVET College in KwaZulu-Natal. Its findings thus cannot be generalized to the wider student population or other colleges in the province. However, they might be applicable to TVET Colleges or universities with similar characteristics and student housing dynamics.

4.11 Conclusion

The chapter presented the research methodology employed to conduct this study, including the research design and paradigm, sampling and data collection and analysis strategies. The interpretivist paradigm

was adopted in order to ascertain the world view of students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and its impact on academic performance. A qualitative research methodology was employed and in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis were used to gather data. The chapter also discussed the ethical considerations in conducting the study, trustworthiness and the study's limitations.

The following chapter presents the analysis of the data in relation to the study's first two research objectives.

Chapter 5: Relating the experiences of living in private off-campus residences to academic performance

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interprets the data generated through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis in relation to the first two research questions, namely, what are TVET students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences? How does the experience of living in private off-campus residences influence TVET students' academic performance? In order to simplify the discussion and summarize the findings, I coded and categorized the data according to themes derived from the theoretical framework. Direct quotations from the transcripts of the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions are presented to portray the participants' experiences and to substantiate the arguments derived from the analysis of the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). While the quotations were edited to enhance readability, care has been taken to retain their original meaning. In line with Creswell et al. (2014), the data was categorized according to its identifying characteristics. The following table presents the demographic profiles of the participants who were interviewed:

| Participant | Gender | Program | Age Group | Type of private off-campus residence |
|-------------|--------|------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Female | NCV level2 | 31 and over | Single room in a house |
| 2 | Female | NCV level3 | 19-25 | Outbuilding |
| 3 | Male | NCV level2 | 19-25 | Outbuilding |
| 4 | Female | NATED n5 | 26-30 | Single room in a house |
| 5 | Male | NATED n5 | 19-25 | Single room in a house |
| 6 | Male | NATED n6 | 19-25 | Outbuilding |
| 7 | Female | NATED n5 | 19 | Outbuilding |
| 8 | Male | NATED n6 | 19-25 | Outbuilding |
| 9 | Male | NATED n6 | 31 and over | Single room in a house |
| 10 | Female | NATED n5 | 19-25 | Outbuilding |
| 11 | Male | NATED n4 | 19-25 | Single room in a house |
| 12 | Male | NATED n4 | 26-30 | Single room in a house |
| 13 | Female | NATED n5 | 26-30 | Single room in a house |
| 14 | Male | NATED n4 | 19-25 | Single room in a house |
| 15 | Female | NATED n4 | 19-25 | Single room in a house |

| | | | | |
|----|--------|----------|-------------|------------------------|
| 16 | Male | NATED n5 | 19-25 | Single room in a house |
| 17 | Female | NATED n6 | 31 and over | Single room in a house |
| 18 | Female | NATED n5 | 19-25 | Outbuilding |
| 19 | Female | NATED n5 | 19-25 | Outbuilding |
| 20 | Male | NATED n5 | 19-25 | Outbuilding |

TABLE 1: In-depth interview participants

The participants who were interviewed consisted of ten males and ten females. Three of these students are living with disabilities. Most of the participants were from the NATED since they were easily accessible due to them attending the modules that I taught. The following table depicts how the focus groups were organized:

| Group | A | B |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
| No. of participants | 10 | 10 |
| Gender | Females/males | Female/males |
| Age | 19-31 and over | 19-31 and over |
| Program | NATED/NCV | NATED/NCV |

TABLE 2: Focus groups participants

Each focus group consisted of five male and five female participants who lived in private off-campus residences. One group had two NATED students and three NCV students while the other had three NATED students and two NCV students. Each group also had one student with a disability who was from NATED.

5.2 TVET students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences.

The findings reported here were derived from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions conducted with the participants from the Majuba CPD campus. The following themes were identified; socio-economic backgrounds, reasons for choosing Majuba TVET College, finding a residence during registration and living in private off-campus residences.

5.2.1 “Socio-economic” background

The participants’ responses revealed that they came from a range of “socio-economic” backgrounds. Most lived in child-headed homes or with their grandparents. Participants 2, 3 and 4 described their home situations as follows:

Participant 2: *I am the only one who takes care of my sisters and brothers. My mother died in 2012. She was sick and I had to look after her. I did well in my subjects and decided to enroll at Majuba College because there is NSFAS.*

Participant 3: *I did not know my parents. I had to go to school and I chose Majuba College.*

Participant 4: *Myself and my siblings live with my grandmother. I am the oldest and my granny allowed me to enrol for tertiary studies. Luckily, I was able to register at Majuba College.*

Some of the participants came from homes where their parents were unemployed or depended on social grants and other means of income. This is captured by the following participants’ experiences:

Participant 5: *My big sister passed Grade 12 and is now working as a domestic worker and provides the only income at home.*

Participant 6: *I live with both my parents but they are not working and there are ten of us. We survive with our support grant.*

Participant 12: *I stayed with my sister who is not working, but she has boyfriend who is working.*

Other participants described the poor “socio-economic” circumstances at home:

Participant 7: *My mother drinks a lot so I decided to go to Majuba College. I passed matric with a Bachelor’s pass with three distinctions. I decided to go for walk-in registration and luckily the college enrolled me.*

Participant 9: *We are too many at home. I worked for three years and found that I was nothing without a diploma so I decided to go to college and now I am at Majuba College.*

Participant 10: *I talked to my brother about registering at Majuba College and we asked our grandmother to allow us to go to Newcastle for study purposes. We did not know what Majuba offered and we just asked what every queue was for until we were registered. We promised our grandmother that we will not ask her for any money because we will get NSFAS.*

Participant 13: *My grandfather and I lost our other family members in a car accident. I left my grandfather but he is sick and I used to go home because we have livestock.*

Participant 16: *My life is so terrible. I stayed with my uncle and my daughter. My neighbors wondered how I survived and I do not know how I lived. I am afraid for my four-year-old daughter because when I attend afternoon classes I leave her with my uncle who is mentally disturbed. Sometimes my uncle breaks all our window panels. I do not have money to take my kid to crèche and I come back from school at 6.30 in the afternoon for the whole semester.*

Participant 18: *I stay with my mother, who is in a polygamous² marriage of six wives. My mother is the fifth. My father is a taxi owner. My mother looks after me and my six siblings. My father gives us what he wants and it ends there.*

Thompson et al. (2013) note that students from low socio-economic backgrounds often lack self-esteem and self-discipline and display poor time management skills, resulting in poor academic performance. Staten (2016) observes that parents' income and marital status influence the level of support that they are able to offer their children. Sullivan (2012) describes habitus as the set of attitudes and values that a person holds. These can affect their progress in life and their academic performance. The participants appeared to be eager for education despite their poor socio-economic conditions at home. A student's background is also a psychological factor that may influence their academic performance (Mbambo, 2016).

5.2.2 Reasons for choosing Majuba TVET College

The participants' responses in this regard reflect that while some were influenced by family members or peers to attend Majuba TVET College, others learned about it from newspapers or radio advertisements. A number noted that they did not gain admission to university and some stated that they were unemployed and wanted to improve their qualifications. Finally, some were so determined to access tertiary education that they were prepared to attend any institution that would enroll them:

Participant 5: *It was advertised on the radio in February 2016.*

²A polygamous marriage refers to a marriage between a man and more than one wife.

Participant 6: *I did not get a space at university.*

Participant 7: *I did not qualify for university entry.*

Participant 10: *I was just looking for any higher education.*

Participant 12: *I was working very hard for five years and I decided to register at a higher education institution. I saw that I was nothing if only having grade twelve.*

Participant 16: *I was just looking for any higher education and passed grade 12, so I was trying my luck.*

Participant 17: *Myself and my friends from high school decided to register at Majuba College, because we had not studied for five years. We also heard that Majuba College has NSFAS to study.*

These views indicate that some of the reasons for registering at the TVET had to do with NSFAS funding. Other participants' emphasized that if one is not educated, one will not find a job. While students who enroll at TVET colleges are eligible for NSFAS funding (DHET, 2013), the policy does not state the exact process and duration of funding. The NSFAS policy (2019) requires students to reapply every year with the required documents. While the participants seemed to be under the impression that NSFAS covers all their needs, including living in private off-campus residences (National Plan for Higher Education, 2009), the NPHE (2009) notes that NSFAS funds increase at a low rate each year and that it does not fund all students in HE.

Poverty is linked to social class. It limits people's choices and the kind of education students may acquire (DoE, 2011). Poverty-associated factors cited by the participants included their willingness to register at any HEI where they could gain admittance, having to leave home and live in private off-campus residences, and dysfunctional families and/or communities. These factors according to the (MNSFSH Report, 2015) may directly or indirectly influence their educational performance. Chapter two section 29 (1b) of South Africa's Bill of Rights states that, everyone has the right 'to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible'. Therefore, TVET Colleges enroll students with both low and high aggregates in their matric examinations with a view to expanding access to HE.

5.2.3 Finding a residence during registration

While the participants responded in different ways, the responses indicate that they assisted others to find a place to stay even though they did not know one another. They also highlighted the problems that they encountered getting to the institution for registration. The following experiences were shared:

Participant 1: *I knew a person who was already studying at Majuba College and I told him that I wanted to study at the college but I did not have place to sleep during registration. He said that I must come and he would see me when I was at Madadeni.*

Participant 2: *I did not know anybody. I asked a girl who was in the queue with me to help me with a place to sleep.*

The above experiences indicate that Majuba TVET College has no student residences. Students are forced to make their own arrangements regardless of not knowing anyone at the institution on arrival. The plight of the participants in securing a place to sleep is illustrated below:

Participant 5: *I had to be friendly in order to find a place to sleep. I changed places five times because I had problems. Now I am staying at section 7 (20 km from the college).*

Participant 7: *At first I stayed at Meadowlands where the SRC found us a place. I do not know what happened, but we were evicted from there.*

Meadowlands is a male and family hostel for people who work at Arcelo Mittal (a company that manufactures steel). These residences were available to students from the Madadeni campuses.

Similarly, during the focus group discussions, the participants in group A and B reported that:

I slept with another home boy;

It seemed that the participants put themselves at huge risk in order to get an education. When they came to register, they did not care if they had a place to sleep. Their focus was to register at the college. Once registered, they dealt with the issue of residences. The excerpts below recount how some of the participants in the focus group discussions secured a place to stay:

I got my landlord's cell number from a student I knew, and then my mother phoned her and my mother paid. So I already had a room to stay;

I asked other girls who said that they have a place to stay, but I had to find mine; we decided to collect money as a group of four and look for a place to stay during registration. After that we had to separate. We got one for R200 per day.

These excerpts indicate that the participants arrived without money to survive during the period of registration. Perhaps they thought that NSFAS would pay them immediately after they registered. They also thought that the registration process would be easy. In reality, it usually took four days or more to be registered. The process relies on availability of the required documents that needed to be certified and processed. It seemed that the participants arrived for walk-in registration without knowing how many students would be accepted into particular programs or when they would be paid by NSFAS. The responses below reflect this state of uncertainty:

I have relatives in town (Newcastle); unfortunately, I did not find space at Majuba; I travelled every day from Ladysmith to Madadeni (150 km); I used to hike because the public transport took too long; I am from Bergville. My high school mates and I decided to hire a taxi to Majuba TVET College to register. The taxi driver took us to college and every day after five he had to collect us to take us back home. We are from Ulundi. We travelled every day and came home at night. We were very tired and just imagine, not all of us got a space to study at Majuba TVET College.

I found other girls who do not have a place to sleep. We went street by street and it was very late. We saw a grandmother who was closing her gate and we explain that we came for registration. (I followed-up about how many were in this predicament and where they came from). We were five, including two boys and we from different places like Durban, Pongola, Vryheid and the other two are from Mpumalanga. The grandmother gave us permission to sleep. In the morning I asked the others how much we should pay. Some said they do not have money and their parent will send it; other said they did not have money; they hiked to college and they ran away. Luckily the grandmother said she does not want money and we appreciated it. Then we went back to college to stand in another queue for registration.

These excerpts illustrate that students need to find a place to stay during registration as well as during their studies. They point to the hardships and difficulties the participants faced in doing so and, as noted earlier, to the way they worked together to address these challenges. Some formed relationships with total strangers in order to survive. The government is aware that the HE Sector in general has a problem concerning residences (DHET, 2013), and that on-campus residences cannot accommodate all the

students that enroll each year. The scarcity of private off-campus residences near Majuba TVET College may also present as a psychological problem to the participants and may affect their academic performance since they encounter social problems even before the start of teaching and learning (Merrill et al., 2006d). I noted that most participants were from disadvantaged backgrounds. They mentioned that they came for registration with very little or no money. They thus needed to secure cheap accommodation. Other factors included the distance of the private residence from the campus and the cost of public transport as well as the time it took to walk or hike to campus and back. They were also prepared to share a place with mixed genders.

5.2.4 Living in private off-campus residences

All Majuba TVET College students have to find a place to stay from the start of registration to the end of the program they are enrolled in. The cost and type of private residence depend on the landlord's terms and conditions. Some of the participants found accommodation far from the college, and thus incurred huge transport costs. The participants shared their experiences of living in these private off-campus residences as follows:

Participant 1: *I found a residence in section two near the college. It is me, and two other girls. We are enrolled in different programs on the same campus. The house is a four room. We are living in one room, sharing one double bed. We have a small table for a two-plate stove, and dishes. We also bath in the room using a washing basin. We only came with our clothes. In summer, we need to cook earlier because the room is not big enough. The toilet is outside the house and we fetch water outside. We are paying R250 per head on the last day of the month. If anyone has a problem with paying they are supposed to tell the landlord. Our landlord is a female who is not working. We are not allowed to come back later than 6pm and the gate is locked after that.*

The above excerpt indicates that the participants accepted any type of private residence. Most of the private off-campus residences were located in the low- cost housing sections of Madadeni. When the participants located these residences, they did not consider the impact that living under such conditions would have on their well-being as well as their academic performance. Other participants shared their experiences as follows:

Participant 3: *I stay at Osizweni with my extended family. We are ten people. I am paying R1000 per month for food. I must also pay the transport cost. My aunt is a domestic worker who earns R1500per month. She is the only one working. It is a four- room house. We sleep in one bedroom and my aunt sleeps in her room.*

Participant 4: *I am at section 5 in Madadeni with three girls in the same room. We are renting a four-room house and sharing with boys' students who are doing engineering. We have two single beds and sleep two per bed. We also have a table for our two-plate stove and our dishes. There is no toilet inside the house and we fetch water outside the house with buckets. The house is not well fenced. We have to sleep without closing the main door because the boys come back late around 7pm after attending afternoon classes.*

Participant 5: *I am staying with other boys who were already doing N6 at Majuba College. They bought second-hand furniture's and when they finish their schooling studies; I have to pay for that furniture. We agreed that I can have another student in the room or I can stay alone. The room is R1000 including water and electricity. The landlord comes to load electricity.*

The above excerpts reflect that males and females lived together. Some of the participants lived in private off-campus residences where the landlord was not present. Furthermore, they shared accommodation with students enrolled in different programs. Sharing rooms offered little space for privacy or individuality. The average rent was around R1000 per room and left little money for food and other essentials. The participants from the focus group discussions had the following to say:

Our landlord wants us to pay on the 15th of the month. Anyone who does not pay will not sleep in the house until he manages to pay. It is a funny place; everyone is doing his own thing. It depends on our parents because some have to wait for the social grant. We pay R250per head. It has been a year now.

Our landlord is very strict. If one does not pay he calls the parents and tells them if they don't pay they must find another place. We are supposed to be in the house before 6pm, failing which, the gate will be closed. No one must fetch water from the outside tap after 5pm

These participants highlight problems with landlords. It appeared that they were scared to discuss these with anyone for fear of their safety. Since they trusted me, they shared this information. Another issue is the lack of furniture and space to work in. As indicated in the excerpts above, the participants had to improvise to make tables and they also shared beds. Such conditions are not conducive to learning. These vulnerabilities raise questions about their academic performance. According to Thompson et al. (2013) students who are vulnerable suffer from poor academic performance. On the other hand, easy access to proper residences, facilities and resources may have a positive impact on students' academic performance (DHET, 2011). Omatayo (2010) notes that squatting, overcrowding, and poor resources and facilities in on and off-campus residences undermine students' academic performance.

The participants in focus group B identified further challenges that confronted students living in off-campus residences:

Students are drinking and taking drugs. I will never tolerate such things. I will find another place. This place is the sixth one. We cannot study well in this place. It is very cheap; R250 per month, but there is a lack of privacy as the landlord comes with his friends.

There are lots of places which sell alcohol in Madadeni. If anyone wants it he can get it easily.

While students might resist consuming drugs and alcohol, there is always the danger of succumbing to peer pressure.

The MNSFSH Report (2015) highlighted the lack of sufficient residences for students in public HE. It also pointed to the lack of residences for students with disabilities. The required standard design for residences (Government Gazette, 2015, p. 40) includes a couple of students per cottage, or single room; bathing facilities; a healthy and safe environment; an entertainment room, a food port, and unlimited data. A quality living environment should promote the culture of teaching and learning and should thus enhance students' academic performance. With the student population increasing, the amount of space available for student residences decreases. This leads to students having to occupy private off-campus residences around the institution (Ghari & Soleiman, 2017). These residences are different to those found on campus. They are made available by the private sector and are thus independent of the institution. Some TVET Colleges like Majuba are not subsidized by the DHET to provide student residences. Students opt for cheaper residences that they can afford. However, they come with disadvantages (Ghari & Soleiman, 2017) in that they may be overcrowded, far from the institution, have low levels of security and the infrastructure may not be suitable for a learning environment. These disadvantages have an impact on students' academic performance. Other challenges include insufficient housing supply by the private sector (Ghari & Soleiman, 2017). The advantages of private off-campus student residences are that students enjoy freedom and independence that may enable them to grow personally and intellectually.

5.3 Relating the experiences of living in private off-campus residences to academic performance

This section addresses the data produced to respond to the study's second objective. The following findings are derived from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The data is presented according to the following themes: experiences of living in private off-campus residences and academic

performance, learning challenges due to living in private off-campus residences, and advantages and disadvantages of living in private off-campus residences.

5.3.1. Experiences of living in private off-campus residences and academic performance

The participants identified numerous problems that negatively influenced their academic performance.

Participants in focus group A reported:

We experience lot of things while living in private off-campus residences. We are doing things that would disappoint our parents. It is disturbing my studies and it is very hard to report

I changed residences a lot. I think I am not accepted. I was treated so badly. Where I am, I cannot use my wheelchair because I sometimes find that they switch off their electricity. They assume that it consumes more electricity. So I have to leave it at college. I must have money to pay rent and transport. The only transport that will take me inside the college and drop me inside my residence is a meter tax. I want to pursue my studies, but there are many problems.

These experiences indicate that the participants with disabilities had no suitable residences. Landlords appeared not to care about their requirements but were mainly concerned about the rent. The literature notes that, students with disabilities experience many challenges in HE (Perez-Castro, 2014). These include an imbalance in funding, suitable residences, and insufficient relevant resources. While HEIs and the government have adopted policies that aim to promote equity for students with disabilities, the participants reported that they were still experiencing challenges that negatively influenced their academic performance.

Participants from the focus group discussion also shared other challenges that they experienced while living in private off-campus residences:

Sometimes I slept without eating anything, and the next day too. I have to go to school and it is difficult to explain the problem to every lecturer.

Some problems were deeply traumatizing:

We have been burgled many times. We also have rape problems; we were raped even by our landlord; we cannot tell anyone We report it to SAPS but nothing happens If we are relaxing the bug³ stabs us. Other students go to taverns⁴ and drink alcohol and find “blessers” to sleep with them. We don’t report, because sometimes they give us money.

Participants in focus group B stated:

We cannot get time to study well because our landlord drinks a lot. He comes to our door to shout. The best thing is to find another residence and that is difficult. If you did not pay rent or you made any mistake, he just come to our room any time The girls used to come to our room and at night we have no place to sleep, because we are sharing. Other times, their boyfriends come to our place to fight with us

In our place we use to fight each other. It will be up to that person to find other place to stay. The police officers come frequently Sometimes I find out that my roommates have no food. I have to share with them, and I have to get more groceries before month end.

I do not like to put money together with my roommates because other roommate used to give less money and expect us to understand. Later we see the plastic bags for new clothes or nice things. I share with my mom and other friends.

I cannot find a good place I cannot share with other people because they come with muthi⁵. I am not used to these things and I will be affected As boys we do not have much fighting. Our main problems are changing girlfriends and drinking alcohol

The participants who took part in in-depth interviews recounted similar challenges:

Participant 1: *I do not have money for rent and for food. I used to get help from my friend who is better off than me. I know that I come from an underprivileged family. I want to be better for my family.*

³ Bug is slang for annoying someone.

⁴ A tavern is an establishment where alcoholic beverages are sold and consumed on the premises.

⁵Muthi is African traditional medicine that makes use of various natural products, mainly derived from trees and other plants.

Participant 3: *I share my problems with my friends at college. They gossip a lot and drink a lot. They come at the middle of the night and demand that I open for them. We had a problem of no water and electricity for two to three days. We could not bathe, cook or go to college*

Participant 6: *In my place, I cannot fetch water after 5pm. They have their own culture. No friends are allowed. I have to report if I will not sleep at my place. It is a long distance to travel. We had a burglary and they took our cell phones. We also share the place with girls. There is lot of emotional and physical abuse by other roommates and by landlords. Rooms are very scarce. The public transport is very expensive.*

The above excerpts identify the numerous factors that negatively influence the academic performance of students living in private off-campus residences. Many of the participants cited financial difficulties, with some reporting that they went hungry at times and could not afford to travel to campus. They also mentioned that if they failed to pay their rent they were evicted. Other students noted that travelling long distances to and from campus left them exhausted.

Furthermore, living conditions in private off-campus residences are not conducive for studying. The participants reported that they lived in cramped conditions and lacked basic equipment such as a desk, chairs etc. Electricity and water cuts could last for more than a day. Most of the participants reported that they had to collect water from taps located in the yard outside their rooms and many landlords did not allow them to do so after a certain time of day. Furthermore, some landlords imposed a curfew after which the gate to the property was locked. This reduced the amount of time spent on campus since they had to rush back to their residences. A student with a disability noted that he could not use his wheelchair at his residence and that he incurred exorbitant travel costs just to be transported to and from campus by taxi.

The participants also highlighted disruptions such as loud music, substance abuse, fights, and roommates entertaining partners or friends. A few also noted that their landlord caused disruptions. A number of the participants mentioned that they had fallen victim to burglaries, and others stated that they felt unsafe in their private off-campus residences. Of great concern is the fact that some students said that they had been raped. Most of these incidents were not reported to the police due to the participants' fears of being evicted or further victimized. There also appeared to be no mechanism for them to report such incidents to the TVET College.

Howell (2018) found that some students who live in private off-campus residences travel long distances and arrive home late. The DHET (2018) observed that some private off-campus residences are located in

unsafe neighborhoods and that students who live in such residences are unhappy and lack self-esteem. While previous studies have reported both negative and positive relationships between residence life and student academic performance (REAP, 2010; Rasool&Mahembe, 2014; Kregse Foundation, 2012), studies in European countries concluded that there is a positive relationship between living on campus and student performance (Kregse Foundation, 2012). Most previous studies conclude that students who reside on campus are more successful than those who live in private off-campus residences because they are able to access all the facilities on campus (Rasool&Mahembe, 2014). Pascarella et al. (2013) found that students who reside on campus have high pass rates, complete their qualifications, and acquire critical thinking and cognitive thinking skills. The participants' experiences of learning while living in private off-campus residences are presented below.

5.3.2 Learning challenges due to living in private off-campus residences

The study participants identified numerous challenges that impede their learning, both on campus and at their place of residence:

Participant 1: *... sometime there is no water and electricity. There will be no computer practice; the time is going Strikes usually occur for almost a whole month. Lectures absent themselves Sometimes most of the students absent themselves, and the lecturer only lets us sign only the attendance register. It depends on the management. Sometimes they said we must go when there is no water and electricity. It is difficult to understand some lecturers. I have to ask peers to help.*

Watson (1913) and Skinner (1990) viewed learning as nothing more than the acquisition of new behavior based on human environmental conditions. While they regarded learning as an adaption to stimuli, Mahlomaholo (2012, p 15) posits that 'learning when it is most effective, results in improved productivity and includes economic, social, cultural and behavioral dimensions'. The participants stated that they lacked facilities in their private off-campus residences and at college. They also mentioned that they could not do their work after hours as they had no internet or data and the college libraries closed early. Furthermore, conditions in their private off-campus residences like the consumption of drugs and alcohol, harassment and abuse, hampered learning. They also alluded to the fact that they needed all stakeholders to be available for the duration of the entire program. The following excerpts confirm this:

Participant 13: *I bunked classes because I did not do homeworkI do not have the required resourcesThe lecturer said that I must not come to class if I am lateWe do not have a lecturer for a particular subject. Strikes disturb a lot.... I was sick and I missed so many lectures.*

Participant 14: *Some lecturers are too fast when they teach. I have to work hard because we have short time to learn. We are also disturbed by strikes. I had a problem with a place to stay. I had to find another place. I would like the lecturers to do revision with us. We need support from them. ...we need more time for teaching and learning. ... Need support material*

These excerpts indicate that the participants need academic support at college as they experience personal difficulties on campus as well as in their private off-campus residence. Mc-Donnel et al. (2014) assert all stakeholders in HEIs should be committed to addressing students' needs by considering students' knowledge, effectiveness and psychological behavior. Maslow (2013) posited that the conditions one live-in is likely to affect the quality of one's progress. Thus, the effectiveness of the learning environment in HE is an important determinant of student performance. Furthermore, Skinner (1990) argued that student learning is embedded in social and societal contexts and these influence what and how one learns. Learning environments are key to engaging students intellectually, socially and emotionally and may in turn lead to social transformation.

The participants in focus groups A and B reported a number of learning challenges:

Sometimes I am too slow during the teaching. I need the lecturers to explain more. Sometimes I do not understand the instruction given. The time set aside for teaching is too small. I need more time to learn. I cannot study because my roommates play loud music. I started smoking dagga. Now I am addicted to it and I do not have enough time to learn. In my place there are a lot of drugs. People come in big cars to sell drugs. The drugs are very cheap, and most of the people are taking drugs

Life is too busy, and I found out that the examination is around the corner. I am already overloaded. Sometimes I need to use the internet for my homework only to find that the computers in library have already been booked. I am then behind with my workIt can be a week of not going to campus because I do not have money for transport. Sometimes we are lazy to study or we had parties

I travel a long distance from my residence to college. I have to cook and I get there already tired. In our place there is a lot of noise; some students are drinking alcohol or use drugs. living in Sodom and Gomorrah⁶

The fourth level in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (2013) is self-esteem. Psychologist Alfred Adler noted that low self-esteem is at the root of many if not most, psychological problems (Franken, 2008). Students

⁶ Sodom and Gomorrah are places that became infamous for the greatness of the sins of the people that once lived there and their tragic destruction.

who perform well academically have high self-esteem that results in confidence, freedom, competence, achievement, mastery and independence.

The learning challenges cited in the above excerpts impede students' academic performance and thus undermine their self-esteem (Maslow, 2013). They include factors relating to the college itself, such as absent lecturers, a lack of lecturers to teach some subjects, the limited time allocated to teaching, the need for more support from their lecturers, a lack of resources such as computer labs, strikes, and electricity and water cuts.

The participants also pointed to problems in relation to their private off-campus residences that impede learning such as noise and other disruptions, financial difficulties, travelling long distances, and electricity and water cuts. Finally, they cited behavioral issues such as substance abuse, partying and laziness that hamper their learning.

Pascarel and Terenzin (2014) found that learning challenges in HE education included cultural, ethical, and socio-economic factors. Furthermore, they concluded that students who live on campus achieve good academic performance. Toutkoushian and Smart (2010) also noted that students who reside in on-campus residences are able to access facilities provided by their institution that promote a culture of learning.

Astin's Theory of Involvement Models (1993, p. 134) aims to 'develop social and intellectual life in college by encouraging student-to-student involvement, institution-to-student involvement, student participation, academic participation and academic assistance'. The theory has two aspects, namely, academic integration/involvement and social integration/involvement. His model resonates with my research topic that relates TVET College students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences to their academic performance. The academic aspect aims to improve student performance whereas the social aspect promotes responsible behavior and independence (Toutkoushian & Smart, 2010). Some students from rural areas reject their culture and embrace destructive social habits that are prevalent in urban areas.

A lack of academic literacy also hampers academic performance (Nyamupangedengu, 2017). When students reach tertiary level, they are expected to take their own notes. Some are over-reliant on their lecturers (Nyamupangedengu, 2017). Students also need to prepare for lectures (Nyamupangedengu, 2017) by completing the set readings. The pace at which the lecturer proceeds also affects students' academic performance. All students learn differently and enter tertiary education with different levels of expertise. Lecturers are thus required to adopt appropriate teaching strategies to accommodate the diverse study body (Nyamupangedengu, 2017).

5.3.3 Advantages and disadvantages of living in private off-campus residences

Living in private off-campus residences has both pros and cons. The table below shows the advantages and disadvantages identified by the participants.

| Participants' voices | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|----------------------|---|--|
| | To those who can afford to pay | Few can afford |
| | Depend on affordability | Cannot afford |
| | Has decent furniture | Limited furniture |
| | Having responsibility | No accountability |
| | Enough space | No space |
| | No disturbances | Lots of disturbances Focus group A: <i>In our residence we experiencing lot of disturbances</i> |
| | Independence | Depend on others |
| | More security In-depth interview: <i>our landlord is more secure</i> | No security |
| | Negotiable rent | Fluctuating amount |
| | Do as you wish | Depend on others |
| | Few problems | Lots of problems |
| | Can practice own culture | Mixed culture |
| | Self-discovery | Peer influence In-depth interview: <i>We use to go to tavern and it was my first time ...</i> |
| | No sharing Focus group A: <i>I am only one in my room</i> | Sharing a lot |
| | Discipline | Transport fees |
| | More life benefits | No life benefits |
| | Having a choice of room/location | No choice |
| | Access any time | Depend on other roommates |
| | Have lots of friends | Lonely |
| | Save money | Too expensive to rent |

TABLE 3: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN PRIVATE OFF-CAMPUS RESIDENCE (Compiled by the researcher)

Jones et al. (2015) state that students who reside in private off-campus residences need mutual support in order to maximize their academic performance because they experience many disturbances. Many students that live off campus experience problems because their funding is not sufficient to cover all their needs (Judith, 2010). Merrill et al. (2005) found that improved living conditions resulted in improved student academic performance while Hulton et al. (2016, p. 15) note that ‘students’ place of residence impacts their health, satisfaction, social behavior, welfare, and stress levels’. When students’ academic and social needs are fulfilled, their academic performance improves. Students who live on campus not only have access to the facilities offered by their institution (such as Wi-Fi and properly equipped rooms), but have the opportunity to engage in social interaction that enhances their well-being, positively influencing their learning (Ghari & Soleiman, 2017).

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings that responded to the study’s first and second objectives. The data was analysed and presented according to the themes that emerged from the theoretical framework. Descriptions of the participants’ experiences of living in private off-campus residences and how this influenced their academic performance were provided and explained. The next chapter presents the findings that align to the study’s third and final objective.

Chapter 6: Why living in private off-campus residences influences academic performance

This chapter presents the findings that respond to the third and final research question that sought to understand why TVET students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences influenced their academic performance in the way that they do. The data was produced through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The following themes emerged from the data: the role of college support, the role of community support, the role of parental support, college infrastructure and facilities, and NSFAS.

6.1 The role of College support

Many of the students studying at Majuba TVET College are far from home and therefore require support from the college. The participants indicated that their experiences of support from the college were minimal to non-existent. Despite college policies with regard to student support, the participants who came from very poor socio-economic backgrounds stated that a lack of support led to poor academic performance. Participants from the focus group discussion had the following to say:

If you do not have money at Majuba College you cannot survive, because there are lot of things needed for learning i.e. Wi-Fi, photocopying and other resources. I cannot go to the library after four because will be closed. If I want to do copies I have to pay 50 cents per copy. I cannot afford that. I also cannot do my homework or do my work alone I have to wait for the next contact session. The library is too small for the whole college. Sometimes I cannot find a space to sit and sometimes it is too noisy. There are only ten computers for students in library and some are not working. Even in computer classes, some of computers are not working and we are supposed to share and we cannot practice. Yet at the end, we should have a year mark and final mark.

The other day I was sick and I could not walk because I felt dizzy. I needed to settle myself before I went to my room. I have walk far to the public clinic. I could not even take a pill because I was also hungry. A student told me about the mobile clinic that comes every Tuesday. We also hear about safety and security personnel but I don't see those people. There is not much support at our college.

According to Maslow (2013), to live a satisfactory life, a person should be able to satisfy all five levels of human needs. The first level is about satisfying one's physical needs. In the case of the participants, they require a residence and food during their entire program; and safety and security at their private off-campus residences and at college. They also require financial security, which means that NSFAS should pay on time. The next level is social needs that include belongingness and love. The participants should thus have a good relationship with their landlords and with their peers, lecturers and administrators at

college. They need to feel at home. The next level is self-esteem needs where the participants need to be accepted and loved by the residence community as well as the college community. Finally, self-actualization needs require them to complete their NATED diploma or certificate for NCV. However, the data analysis revealed that not all these needs were met due to the lack of college support. The excerpt below evidences this:

During the final examination we sometimes had some peer educators, but it does not help much because the peer educator has no support documents. He uses the ones I got in the contact session with the lecturer. Some of them I cannot understand them. I would rather have a lecturer. Some of the students used to undermine their abilities so they did not attend regularly. (If we had a new big library, computer laboratories and Wi-Fi, I think it could be better. We can even improve our marks. Maybe NSFAS could pay for these resources. I think we don't need money from NSFAS if we can get residences, foods, transport and other resources for learning.

It seemed that college staff did not guide the participants with regard to their choices of programs. As a result, they made misinformed choices that affected their academic performance, leading to dropping-out in some instances.

The participants in focus group B noted:

I failed all N4 subjects and I have to register in OL. All the N4 subjects were R2500 and I had to do it on my own. The college did not help me with anything. After I passed my N4, I came back to register for N5. Once you fail at Majuba they don't do follow up even if you had problems. Even during your studies nobody in the institution will help. The SRC only deals with NSFAS problems and academic problems. Sometimes they cannot resolve the problem, and then I should deal it myself.

These responses suggest that the participants expected that Majuba TVET College would provide facilities such as resource centers. The lack of support from the college together with poor academic choices resulted in some participants dropping out. Another frustration that was expressed was the lack of funding. This is highlighted below:

I was helped by a lecturer; the SSS did not help me and the college offers no assistance. We waited too long for NSFAS and we even went on strike until they paid all of us. We waited almost two to three months without NSFAS. Some of the students left because they could not make it. I have some problems I do not tell anyone; I would rather keep it to myself. I do not like to share my problems. If I was not feeling well, I just didn't come to college.

The participants who were interviewed expressed similar sentiments:

Participant 15: It is difficult to share a problem with a person who is not a professional, no supportive people at Majuba College. Other lecturer tells me about SSS Some lecturers can help.

The above excerpts show that the most of the participants felt that they received little support from Majuba TVET College, either in the form of resources or in terms of assisting them with personal problems. Bourdieu (1998c) noted that, in historical and modern times, different groups of people have access to different sources and forms of knowledge, depending on variables like race, gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, religion, and even age. Bourdieu (1977) identified economic, cultural and social capital as the three fields in the social space in which social action takes place. This is reproduced in the education system. Lareau and Weininger (2010) define cultural capital as a resource that enables access to scarce resources. It is prone to monopolization, and might pass from one generation to another. They add that lower-class students are not represented in the curriculum, cannot afford to pay for residence and struggle to cope with cultural values. Mereluoto (2012) agreed that the education system neglects lower-class students. The third level of needs in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is belongingness and love. If these needs are not fulfilled, a student will have a negative attitude and experience loneliness and social anxiety. This will result in a lack of self-esteem, which is the fourth level of needs. Ultimately, it will lead to failure to fulfil the fifth level of needs, which is self-actualization.

6.2 The role of community support

The community in which private off-campus residences are situated plays an important role in supporting students. Establishing a relationship with the community in which the private off-campus residences were located appeared to be difficult for the participants:

Participant 1: Sometimes it is hard to get a place to stay because the landlords will ask where my hometown is, who is working at home, and who will pay his rent. They also think that we are crooks and we do not like to pay their rent. The community does not accept us and they lay down many terms and conditions.

Participant 3: If there is a burglary in the neighborhood, they search our rooms and sometimes we see the police officers as if we are the culprits.

The participants in focus group A shared the above views:

We are harassed emotionally and physically. At night I heard someone open the door. When I asked who is at the door he just shouted at us. He asked why we made a noise, but we were sleeping. It is difficult Our landlord drinks alcohol a lot. When we come back from college he shouts at us. He has keys to open our rooms and take what he wants. We tolerate this unhealthy life. We are not protected. Even if we stay with male tenants there are still the same problems.

Even us as males, it's still the same. It is not good to stay in a place where you are not happy. The landlord said that we must make a garden. If a thief takes your things, no one can help you, even if I scream. People just look at you as a mad person. The thieves can take everything. We are not secure in the community.

The participants in focus group B remarked:

They do not understand us; they think we are thieves. ... And it is hard to stay away our home. We have a problem with NSFAS because we have to pay rent, so they think we are lying about the payment. Some of them evicted us.

While some of the participants stated that they felt supported by the community, many felt that they were retreated badly. The issues they raised highlight the need for HEIs to work with communities to address matters of mutual interest.

Social integration occurs when students interact with members of the communities in which their private off-campus residences are located. Students who lived in private off-campus residences are less likely to integrate socially due to feeling alienated and isolated. The participants mentioned that feelings of rejection and prejudice by the community in which they rent are likely to negatively influence their academic performance. They also noted that if NSFAS did not pay them they would be evicted by their landlords.

The fourth level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (2013) emphasizes students' need for support from their peers, lecturers, and members of the community. The community where students occupy private off-campus residences needs to accept and support them.

6.3 The role of parental support

Parental support is a very important factor in everyone's life, whether one is child or an adult. The fact that the participants had to leave their parental home to attend college made it more difficult. In the in-depth interviews, the participants stated that they needed their parents' support:

Participant 1: *I need my parents' support to cope with my hard life. Parents do not believe us ... they just say I am not studying. It is easy for us as students to lie to our parents about our performance and what program we are doing. If they come to the college to look what we are doing, so of them will be shocked.*

Participant 5: *Our parents just throw us in the deep end ...; we don't know how to come out. The parent must get used to higher education. This would put an end to bad experiences.*

The above excerpts indicate that the participants' parents were not very supportive of them once they moved out of their homes and into private off-campus residences. This could be due to parents' socio-economic status, with many unemployed and reliant on government social grants. It may also be attributed to students coming from marginalized backgrounds and not being confident in their experiences and knowledge of the college context. Parental support and their participation are essential factors in effective teaching and learning. Thus, students in HE need parental support to assist them with the challenges they face in the outside world and in their studies. The following excerpt evidences this:

Participant 15: *... during our school days, we were eager to go to tertiary; it is very hard without them, even though they shout at us. We love our parents no matter what. We cannot understand each other but there is a time that I need them.*

Parental support enhances student commitment to complete their studies (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). Numerous strategies can be adopted to motivate parents to participate in their children's tertiary education including making them part of decision making, volunteering and communication with parents (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). A positive relationship between homes and educational institutions benefits institutions, homes and communities (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). It can also help to change the negative views of parents who had negative experiences with schools. There should thus be on-going communication between educational institutions and parents throughout the year (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017).

6.4 College infrastructure and facilities

Facilities⁷ are tools to work with. The college environment also plays an important role in regulating students' level of performance. The participants highlighted the importance of access to the facilities they require to pursue their studies:

Participant 2: *I have changed residences so many times. I need a rampant electricity to charge my wheelchair. I also have problems using the toilet even at college. I have limited access at the collage. I cannot find a suitable residence. I need suitable furniture because I cannot study well. I have to sit on the floor to study and it is difficult to study if it is cold. I would like the library to operate 24 hours.*

Resources are the tools in institutions. Facilities are powerful in bridging theory and practice (Tinto, 1973). Poor facilities lead to poor learning and may result in many challenges related to poor academic performance. This is evidenced in the excerpts below:

Participant 8: *Our classrooms are too small to cater for 30 students especially when it is hot. We need the internet to do our college work. Computer labs, internet, libraries and the college should run 24 hours.*

Participant 16: *Big sports ground, residences, transport like busses to our private off-campus residences. Free to disabled people, resources needed during learning for particular subjects and data. Relevant resources for all disabled students and suitable residences. water, electricity, residences, computers and all that is needed for learning.*

Participants in focus group A and B commented:

There is a lot of work to do at college. The problem is that the college is only available until 5 o'clock. Another problem is that we have no on-campus residences, so we travel long distances. When I am at college, I only go to class. Our college needs a lot of resources.

Facilities are a pillar of an organization. We need 24 hours' internet, and computers. We cannot do homework because there are no facilities.

The South African education system is informed by the principles of the country's constitution, which amongst other things, promotes access to justice for all (1996, Section 9 (1-5)). Justice implies fairness

⁷ Facilities are a place, amenity, or piece of equipment provided for a particular purpose (Cambridge Dictionary, 2013)

and equity, calling for an inclusive education system. Under apartheid, students with disabilities did not have equal access to education (White Paper 6, 2001), with some being misdirected while others were kept in the mainstream where their educational needs could not be met. This led to a high drop-out rate amongst students with disabilities. The White Paper 6 (2001) acknowledges that an inclusive education system that serves students with special educational needs must be informed by the values of equity and redress for historically disadvantaged communities and institutions. Chapter 2.2.1.7) of the White Paper thus proposes that the National Norms and Standards for School Funding should apply to the new Inclusive Education and Training System. However, as the following excerpts illustrate, the participants' responses show that this has yet to be achieved:

Some of us donor have money to pay for things like the internet. If the college can also accommodate disabled people. We need college to be accessible and arrange for disabled people to have more time to write examinations. It is hard to find place to stay because the landlords cannot cater for disabled people. I come from a poor family. I came to Majuba because of NSFAS. If they cannot provide us with proper facilities that is very hard for me. It will cause to bunk classes and fail to do work on my ownIt is not easy to perform better because I do not have proper facilities on campus and also in res.It seems as if we are limited with NSFAS at Majuba College because we have to choose between residential fees and transport fees. We cannot get other things. We need data, computers, and a photocopy machine for students and more. The classrooms do not accommodate disable people and the furniture is not comfortable to study at.

Pishghadam (2011 p. 23) define cultural facilities as the 'internet, computers, pictures, paintings, libraries, books and dictionaries', while Bourdieu (1977 p. 340) defined cultural capital as the 'accumulation of knowledge, behavior and skills that one can draw on to demonstrate one's social status or standing in society'. Agbola et al. (2010 p. 194) describes housing productivity as the 'ideal point between housing productivity and other investment to national income which equals the decrease in the contribution of alternative sectors resulting from an addition in building'. It thus focuses on the extent to which student residences and students' social life enhance academic performance (Agbola, 2015). Growth in both the quantity and quality of student housing improves academic performance (Merrill et al., 2006d). Behaviorists (Watson, 1913; Skinner, 1957; Pavlov, 1927) posit that their external environment that alters their thoughts shapes humans. They define learning as nothing more than the acquisition of new behavior based on humans' environmental conditions.

Astin's Theory of Involvement Model (1993) confirms that students who lack physical and psychological support take longer to complete their programs or drop out of college. As times change, students' residences also need to change (Ghari & Soleiman, 2017), as do the facilities and infrastructure at colleges.

6.5 NSFAS

Every South African HEI requires funding from NSFAS to support students. Most of the participants stated that this funding is very important to them, and that, without it, they would not be able to access tertiary education. They also noted the challenge of NSFAS giving them an option of receiving money for transport or to pay rent, as they needed assistance to pay for accommodation, food, transport, water, electricity, and learning resources. The following excerpts highlight their concerns:

Participant 1: *I came to Majuba College because there was NSFAS. No one is working at home. The problem is that NSFAS do not pay the same amount to every student. If payment is not made on time, I really have a problem; I have to explain why I did not pay rent. I use this money to pay rent and to buy food, but we do not get it on time; that is why we have lot of strikes. It is our only source of income.*

Participant 5: *Once I get paid by NSFAS, I send money to my parents to buy what they need. I also pay my rent and buy food. Life is difficult. We have to do too many things with that money. We get disappointed if we do not get it. But we don't mind to strike almost a month in a semester.*

The participants in the focus group A and B commented:

It helps us, and we really need it

I need it. If I do not get it on time it has an effect on my studies, because I need it for transport. So I cannot not go to college. My extended family does not believe in me. ... and my parents do not have to buy food. They have to wait for the social grant before they send it. We waited for months, even the whole semester. The landlord had already evicted us and was forced to squat with our classmates and friends.

... we are also a target for thieves. They rob us during withdrawals.

During the strikes, we lose learning, residence, and everything. When they started to pay it, other students were dropping out. Some get the money at home. Already the department pays for nothing. There was a problem about the money. I have no one who will fund me. I failed two subjects; I am supposed to pay at OL. So I used the money that I get from NSFAS.

Scheiber et al. (2014) observe that financial support enhances students' commitment to learning. In Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (2013) basic physical needs such as food, clothing and housing are a biological requirement for human survival. Tinto (1973) noted that students' experiences influence their

social and intellectual integration. In order to promote good academic performance, NSFAS should pay students on time. The parents of many students at tertiary institutions have low or no income, and many depend on social grants (Merenuoto, 2012). The participants noted that, when NSFAS does not pay on time, students go hungry, cannot afford transport to college and are evicted due to non-payment of rent. Some also drop out of college.

6.6. Document analysis

This section reviews the policies applied at Majuba TVET College that pertain to students living in off-campus private residences and how this influences their academic performance. The policies reviewed include the TVET College Policy and Procedures, Majuba TVET College's policies, the NSFAS Policy, and the Student Support Service Policy. Excerpts are presented from each of the policies that have direct bearing on the participants' experiences.

6.6.1 TVET College Policy and Procedures

This document sets out what is expected of students who attend public TVET Colleges.

Students' requirements:

To attend all periods, arrive on time; to inform the represented lecturers before the class commerce or provide the reason for being late or absent, to produce the medical certificate or any appointments if available during the college sessions.

Consequences:

Three stages to be followed where absence is unauthorized:

Stage 1: *written warning (issued by the lecturer). No more than three written warnings before proceeding to stage 2.*

Stage 2: *review of formal meeting with the lecturer due to attendance less than 80% or absent for than one sessions in a week or being absent four or more times over the period of a month. Unauthorized absence could lead NSFAS to forfeit payments for the rest of the term.*

Stage 3: *if a student continued with less than 80% attendance and failure to improve despites given warnings or reviews. If a second formal hearing for poor attendance is held, this can lead to a final written warning. Should the student continue failing to comply after the final written warning, a student is disqualified from sitting the final examination.*

6.6.2 Challenges to the participants:

Inadequate funding for students from NSFAS.

Delays in payment of accommodation and the transport allowance.

6.6.3 Addressing Disability

'Learners with Special Educative Needs (LSEN) have a right to education, particularly in South Africa, because of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' (Former legal researcher at Section 27, current Clerk of the Constitutional Court and disability activist).

There are no guidelines for TVET Colleges with regard to students and staff with disabilities. Individual colleges use their own discretion and their level of commitment to people with disabilities depends on the available resources.

The National Skills Fund (NSF) was introduced in 2008. In 2010 and 2011, only 47% and 55% of the disability fund was utilized. At that time many students with disability did not qualify for HE.

TVET Colleges do not receive funding to assist students with disabilities or to improve the accessibility of buildings. There are no sign language interpreters, making it difficult for people with hearing disabilities to enrol and be supported.

TVET Colleges need to improve their capacity to accommodate and cater for students with disabilities. Post-school education and training for people with disabilities should be guided by clear procedures that aim to enhance such students' academic performance. This would create an empowering environment across the system and set norms and standards for the integration of students and staff with disabilities in all areas of college life, including academic life, culture, sports and residences.

6.6.4 Policies with regard to TVET Colleges and Accommodation

Between 2010 and 2015, the DHET allocated R4.1 billion to student housing. In response to the outcry about the lack of accommodation at tertiary institutions across the country, the department also announced that it had implemented a student housing infrastructure program to accelerate the provision of housing for students attending TVET Colleges and that various projects would be established in most colleges.

The plan is to develop a total of around 100 000 bed places in TVET Colleges over the next 10 years. Minister of Higher Education, Dr Blade Nzimande announced a major investment in TVET infrastructure, with billions of rands to be spent over two years from 2018 to 2019 on new student housing. A spokesperson for the department said that since Nzimande's announcement, the department had provided about 12000 new bed spaces through the development of a number of smaller projects of 200 to 5000 beds. However, based on the participants' experiences, such accommodation has yet to be provided.

6.6.5 Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning 'is a process that include many variables that interact as learners work towards their goals and incorporate new knowledge, behaviors and skills that add to their range of learning experiences' (Bruner, 1996, p. 20).

'Teaching is about providing lessons on a particular subject to a number of students, while learning involves gaining knowledge by studying, being taught and experiencing. Students can learn without teachers, but teachers cannot teach without learners' (Bruner, 1996, p. 20).

The principles of teaching and learning include:

- *Motivate interaction between students and the institution*
- *Establish interchange and co-operation between students*
- *Motivate learning participation*
- *Ensure an accurate response*
- *Stress task on time*
- *Effective communication*
- *Methods of teaching and multiple skills.*

Learning materials have the capacity to significantly increase student achievement. For example, a worksheet may provide a student with important opportunities to practice a new skill gained in class (Guyana, 2016, p. 50).

Teaching materials refer to the resources teachers use to deliver instruction. Properly designed materials are capable of supporting student learning and increasing student success. Ideally, teaching materials

should be tailored to the content, students and the teacher. While they come in many shapes and sizes, their primary purpose is to support student learning (Guyana, 2016, p. 50).

Governments around the world have acknowledged the importance of TVET systems in producing employees with the skills required by the labor market for economic development. Vulnerable social groups and those that live in poverty and lack marketable skills are the targets of social policy (Basu, 1997).

There are diverse approaches to teaching in TVET settings. Technology applications are a necessity in the modern classroom and all lecturers are required to become technologically proficient. Guthrie et al. (2009) state that TVET teaching and learning requires a curriculum that emphasizes skills, technology, and collaboration. Rapid technological developments, increased registration and financial problems have forced TVET institutions to adopt software- based applications such as animation and simulation software to enhance the teaching and learning process (Jones et al., 2015).

However, the study participants maintained that they did not receive adequate support with regard to teaching and learning resources and that there was a lack of productive interactions with teaching staff.

6.6.6 Academic Performance

Academic performance refers to the skills and cognition that students have mastered in subject or program (Majuba TVET College Policy, 2019). Academic performance / achievements involve the process in which students, teachers and institutions achieve their short- or long-term educational goals. Achieving a milestone such as a diploma or degree signals successful academic performance (Majuba TVET Policy, 2019).

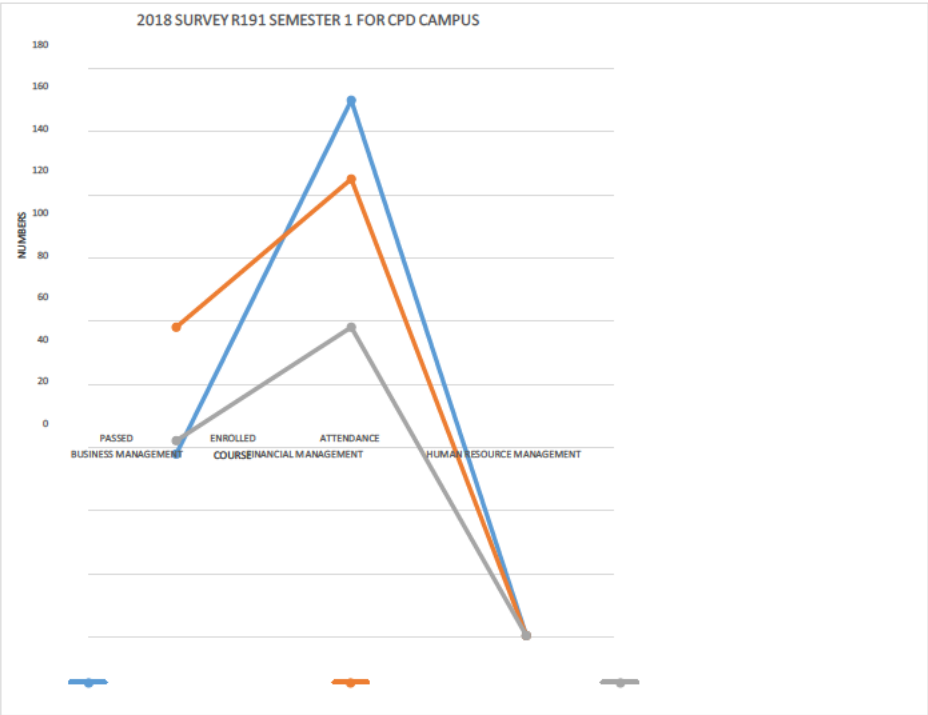
Many factors affect students' academic performance, including the situation at home, teachers and teaching standards. The most important factors are home-related, including the family size, parents' employment and financial status, parental attitude towards education and parenting style (Staten, 2016).

6.6.7 Dropout in TVET Colleges

The increase in student numbers has placed pressure on TVET Colleges to achieve better results. Over the past two decades, TVET Colleges have become institutions of choice for lower socio-economic groups, as they offer them the opportunity to further their studies. I thus investigated how many students completed their studies and the factors that cause students to drop out of college. These are presented in the graphs below.

The following figures show that student attendance is very poor. The data was drawn from the COLTECH attendance registers at the CPD campus.

FIGURE 4: GRAPH FOR 2018 SURVEY R191 SEMESTER 1 FOR CPD CAMPUS



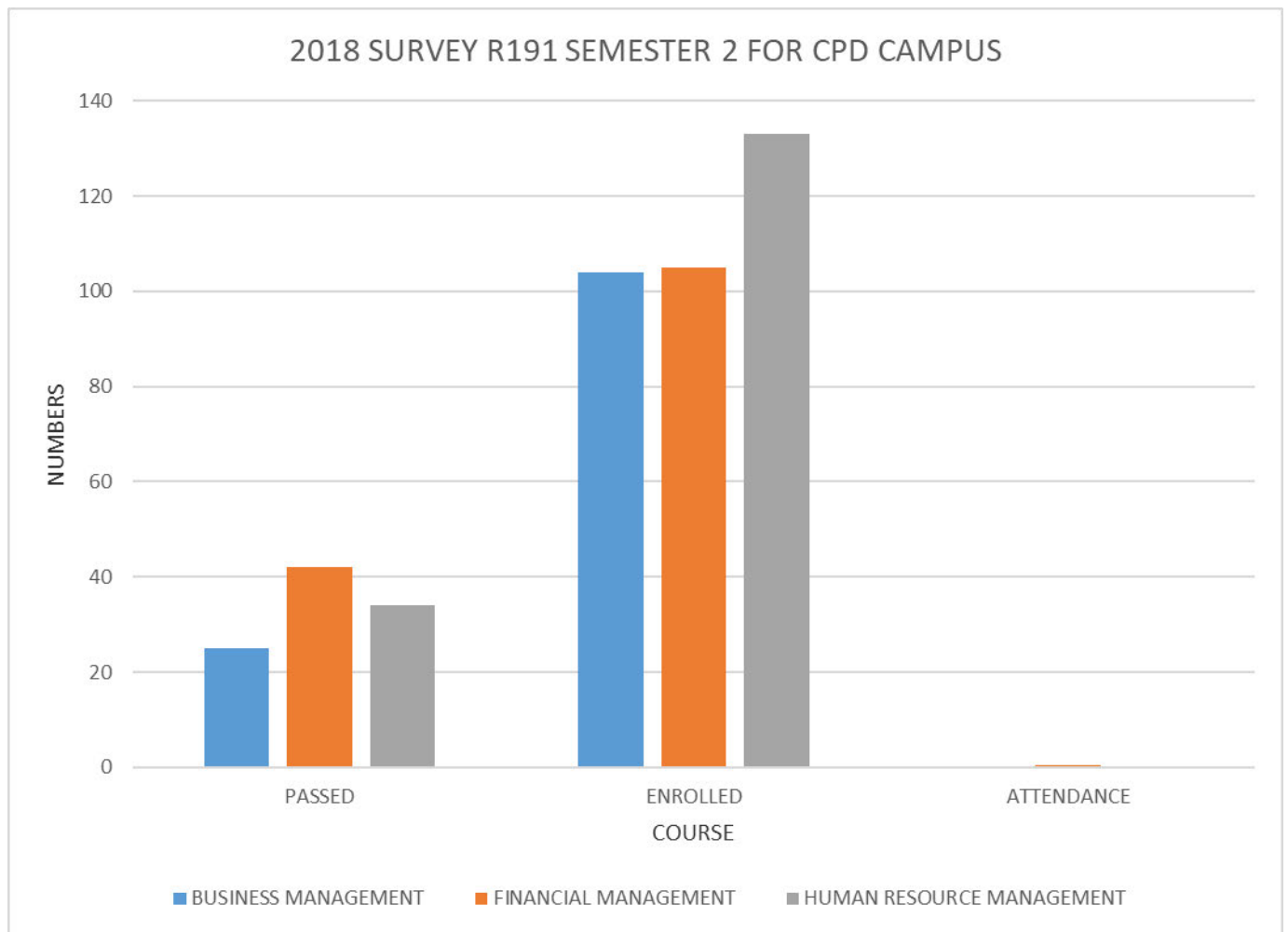


FIGURE 5: GRAPH FOR 2018 SURVEY R191 SEMESTER 2 FOR CPD CAMPUS

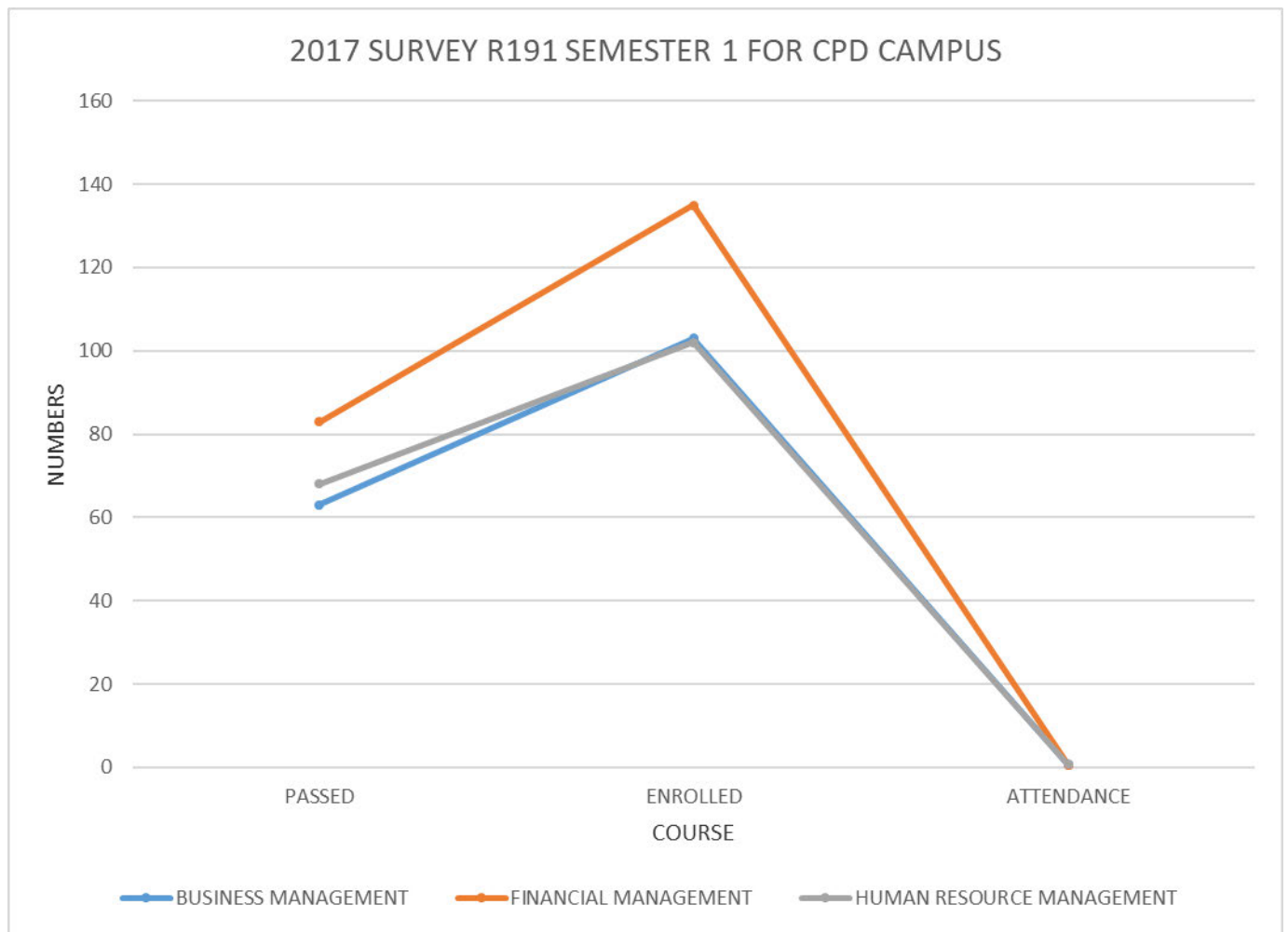


FIGURE 6: GRAPH FOR 2017 SURVEY R191 SEMESTER 1 FOR CPD CAMPUS

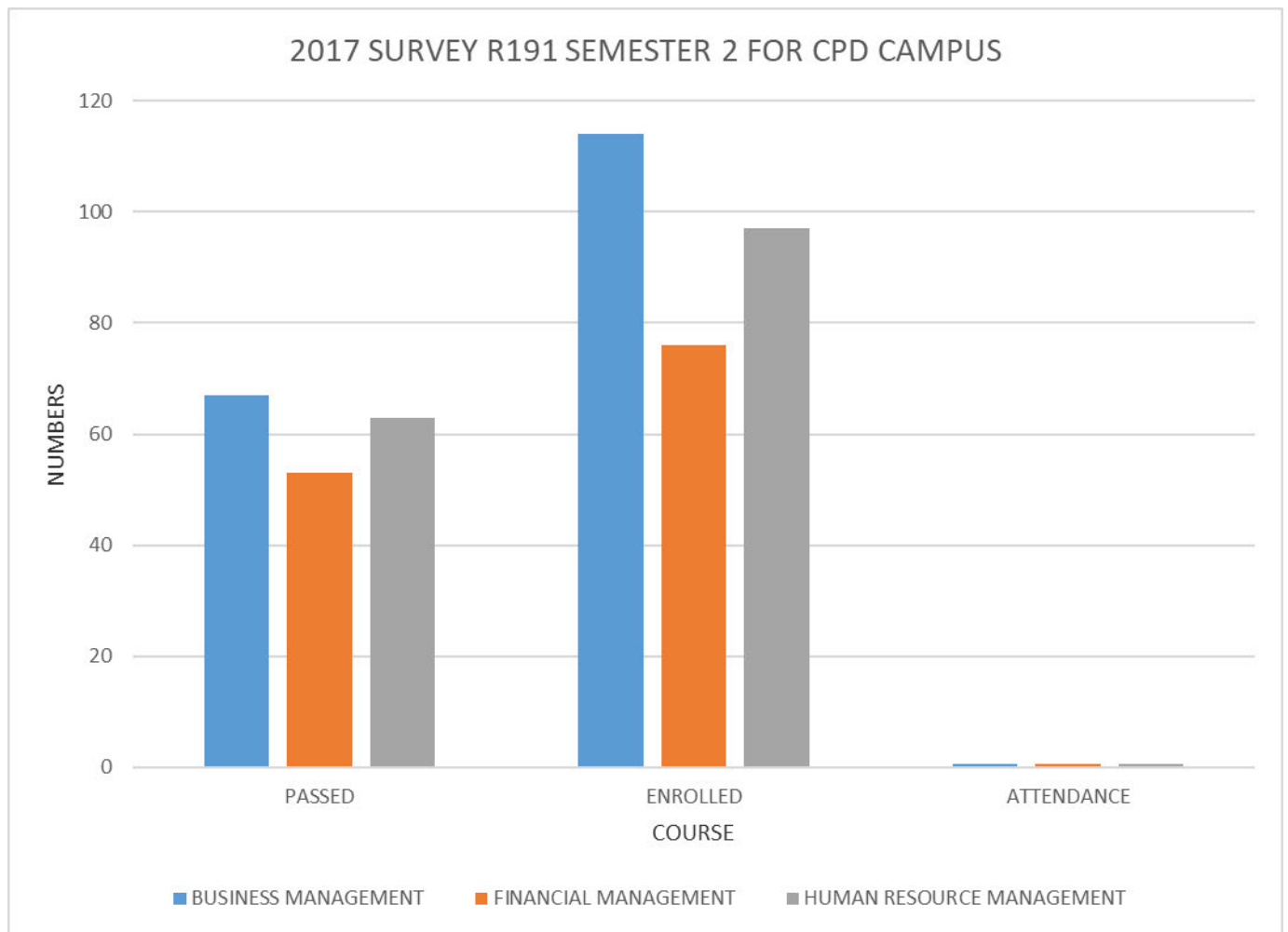


FIGURE 7: GRAPH FOR 2017 SURVEY R191 SEMESTER 2 FOR CPD CAMPUS

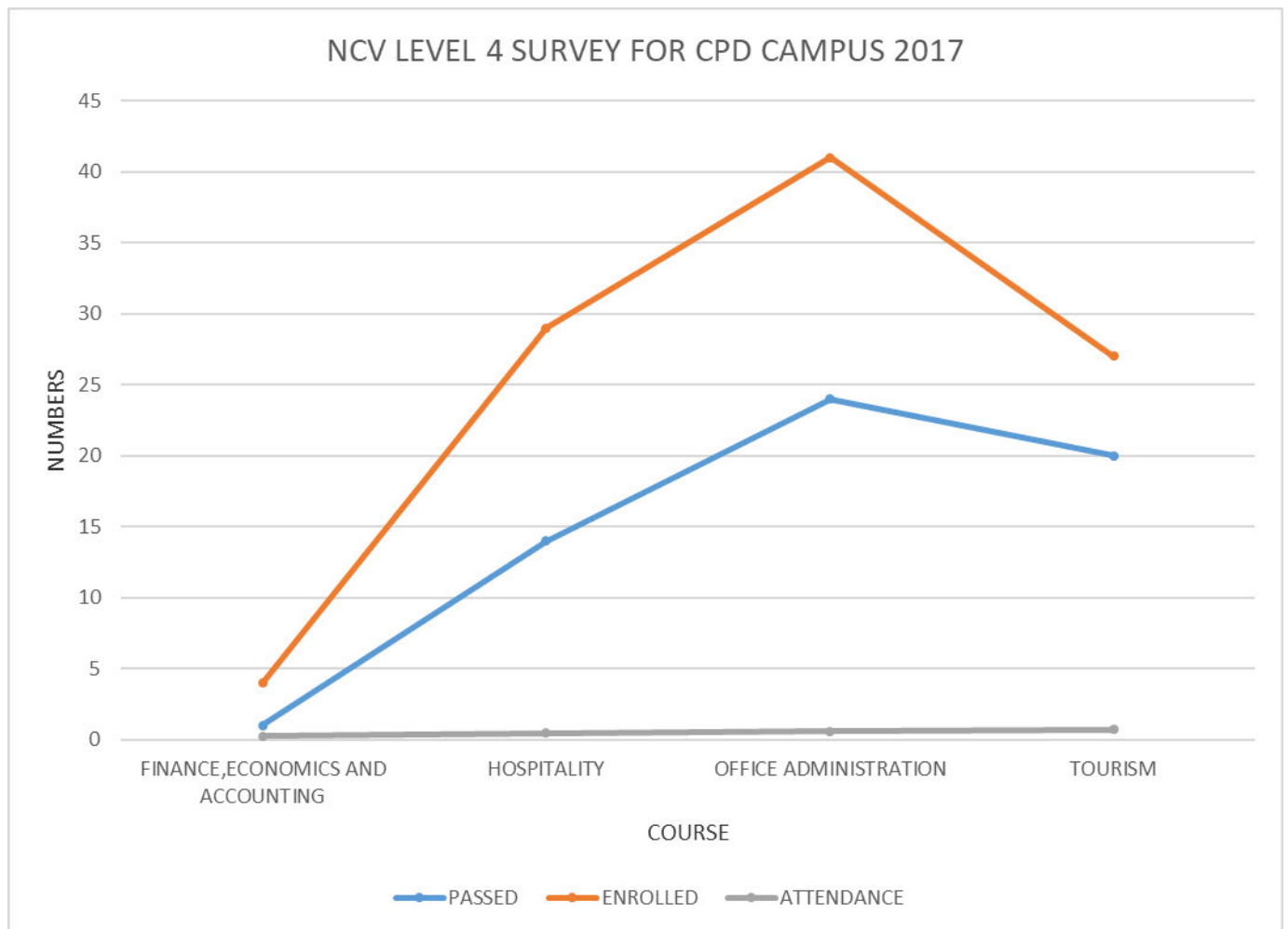


FIGURE 8: GRAPH FOR 2017 SURVEY NCV LEVEL 4 FOR CPD CAMPUS

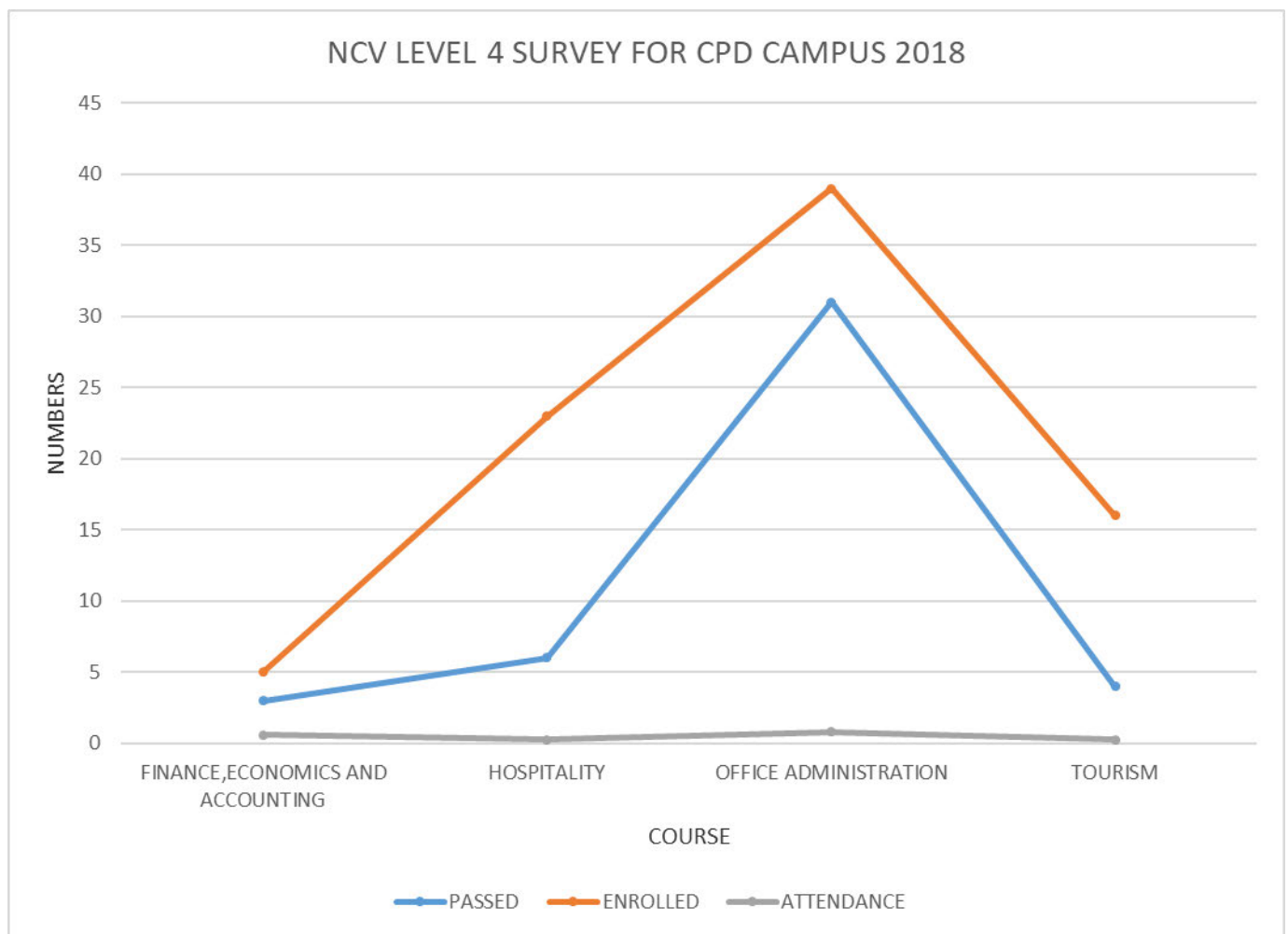


FIGURE 9: GRAPH FOR 2018 SURVEY NCV LEVEL 4 FOR CPD CAMPUS

The graphs clearly show that the number of students that enrolled for NCV or NATED in 2017 and 2018 did not equate to the number that passed. While enrollment rates are very high, pass rates are low, as are attendance rates. This suggests that students confronted difficulties that adversely affected their studies. The participants shared some of their experiences of living in private off-campus residences that may have contributed to the low pass rates.

Majuba TVET College's NSFAS Policy

NSFAS funding provides for both tuition and allowances for student in TVET Colleges. Full payment of college fees is critical as it enables colleges to execute their core mandate of providing quality teaching and learning. The DHET is committed to expanding access to vocational opportunities to all qualifying students, including those whose financial circumstances prevent them from entering college.

NSFAS' main purpose is to sponsor students who qualify for ministerial-approved programs; therefore, TVET Colleges should stick to their accredited enrolment targets and administer strict admission requirements. The college Financial Aid Committee is responsible for allowance applications and for determining the specific allowance per student in line with the regulations and guidelines and the college's own policies. Allowances include a personal care allowance as well as transport and accommodation. Where colleges need additional funds to cater for transport and residence allowances, NSFAS will review and audit all qualifying students in the college. The procedure is as follows:

To be eligible for the DHET TVET College bursary fund, a student must be registered in or wishing to enrol in a NCV or Report 191 programme at any TVET college in South Africa. Students must be in need of financial aid. Those returning to the college must have to pass all subjects interpreted as academically deserving, in line with the college progression policy and the progression rules of the bursary scheme. The gross combined family income should be a maximum of R350 000 per annum. A student that passes the means test must provide a certified copy of his/her Identity Document or a copy of the birth certificate if younger than 18. Other supporting documents together with the bursary application include certified copies of the Identity Documents of both parents, or guardian or spouse or an affidavit if the student does not know the whereabouts of one parent or both parents. If both parents are deceased, a certified copy of the death certificates is required. Salary slips not older than three months for parents or guardians must also be submitted. If the parents or guardians are pensioners, a letter or pension slip is required from the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). Pensions and child support grants are not regarded as income. Copies of students' proof of residence whilst studying and signed rental agreements should also be provided.

NSFAS processes the application within 10 days of receipt of a complete application and submits a list of complete, approved and rejected applications to colleges at a time agreed by both parties. NSFAS should process their bursary application using previous examination results obtained from the department and a student who is continuing to the next class does not have to reapply to NSFAS. The College should inform NSFAS by the end of the first month of each year about returning students qualify for funding.

NSFAS functions as the centralized bursary management system, while colleges have Financial Aid Committees. At Majuba TVET College, this structure comprises of Student Support Services, Finance, Corporate Services, and the Student Representative Council, and Marketing and Management including campus managers. They meet once a month to monitor the bursary administration process. Their functions are to enforce adherence to the bursary procedures and guidelines; promote transparent administration processes; oversee the use of the college tuition fees allocation; develop requirements for granting payments; adjudicate applications for allowances and determine the amount of allowances

including accommodation allowances based on signed rental agreements and local economic activities. Records of all meetings are being kept for audit purposes. The Financial Aid Committee must forward its recommendations to the Principal for approval, and the payments made to the college should not exceed its bursary allocation that is confirmed by the DHET. Colleges should transfer bursary funds to the accounts of all approved applicants within two weeks of the college having received the funds.

Unsuccessful applicants must submit a complaint to NSFAS or the college within 10 working days of being informed of the outcome. The college and NSFAS must formulate a template to be used by unsuccessful applicants and they should keep a register of students who contest the decision. This process must be documented and must include eventual outcomes. The Bursary Appeal Committee is made up of the College Principal; Deputy Principal; Finance, Academic, Student Support Service; Chief Financial Officer, and the SRC President.

Students who pass NC(V) level 4 and wish to enrol for Report 191 N4 after repeating a level must re-apply. Students who were not funded during the previous registration cycle (trimester/semester/year) must also apply. A bursary recipient who fails to progress to the next level of his/her studies should not be awarded a bursary to repeat a level that he/she failed. For new students, academic criteria must be applied using the school report, National Senior Certificate and N3 statement of results. NSFAS must contact the provincial Education Department to verify the authenticity of public schools. Private schools are regulated by the South African Schools Act. In terms of the Act, an independent school must be registered with the provincial Education Department where the school is located.

Bursaries are only provided to students who pass at least five subjects or all subjects. The procedures for students who pass to the next level are stricter as per the progression policy. Students should be granted a bursary for a maximum of four years for the NC(V), with the fourth year allowing them to complete any outstanding subjects. Where bursaries are granted for outstanding subjects, only the actual costs per subject must be paid. Bursary recipients who complete NCV Level 4 are not eligible for financial assistance should they wish to enrol for another NCV programme or Report 191 programme.

Awarding of funds is supported and guided by the College Financial Aid Committee and must be approved by the rector. The amounts allocated to the items awarded in 2019 were an accommodation allowance (inclusive of meals), 40% with R15 000, R18 000 or R24 000 per year for private accommodation more than 40km from the college and R33 000 per year when residing in a college residence. A transport allowance, 60% which is R7 000 per year when residing less than 40km from the college was also allocated. The department has introduced a new allowance in the form of personal care to enable students to purchase personal necessities. This stands at R2 750 per year for all bursary

students. NSFAS provides that colleges should award accommodation allowances to 30% of bursary beneficiaries and travel allowances to 50% of bursary beneficiaries. Should colleges deviate from these guidelines, they must ensure that they are able to justify the grants and deviation therefrom in compliance with the bursary guidelines and regulations.

Residence and transport allowances must be awarded with accountability and records must be kept of funds paid to students. The bursary fund has two processes that are tuition fees and allowances. NSFAS is responsible for determining whether or not students' applications for tuition fees are successful, while colleges decide on applications for transport and residence allowances. Students should only consider private off-campus residence if college residences are already full to capacity or where the TVET College does not have student residential facilities. In deciding on private off-campus residence allowances, the college Financial Aid Committee should consider, inter alia, the going rate in the area appearing on the signed rental agreement. Under no circumstances may Colleges pay private off-campus residence providers directly; the contract must be between the student and the landlord. NSFAS will pay students directly for those on sBUX and students pay for their own private off-campus. NSFAS pays colleges in the case where the college has its own residence and such residence should be inclusive of meals.

Transport, residence and personal care allowances are granted in percentages at the commencement of the new academic year and are intended to improve and promote student attendance. The release of student grants is dependent on minimum 80% class attendance for all the subjects the student is enrolled for. The first percentage is paid to qualifying students in advance. The DHET's *TVET College Attendance and Punctuality Policy, 2013* was developed to improve the retention and pass rates of students in TVET Colleges. Colleges are expected to manage circumstances where the student's attendance is compromised by the college, NSFAS or departmental inefficiencies.

The DHET has unearthed fraud and corruption in the awarding of transport and residence allowances to students, necessitating verification of beneficiaries' residential addresses while studying. Debt collection agencies are used to conduct physical address verifications of 10-25% of randomly selected students receiving transport and residence allowances. Colleges' bursary policies must provide clarity in respect of verification of residential addresses of beneficiaries of these allowances. On completion of the report, the Rector should decide whether to institute a forensic investigation into the administration of the grant.

Students and college stakeholders who defraud the DHET TVET College Bursary Fund should be subjected to an internal disciplinary hearing and criminal charges should be laid against them. The relevant sanction must apply to the suspects if found guilty. NSFAS has the right to withdraw a student grant. The regional office, the department and NSFAS should provide support to colleges when required.

The DHET, its regional offices and Rectors should conduct regular monitoring of colleges' management and administration of the DHET TVET College Bursary Fund using the Bursary Administration Monitoring Tool.

The College is responsible for developing a marketing strategy to advertise the availability of bursaries to students in a responsible, consistent way. Care should be taken to avoid confusion with other bursaries that may be on offer. Colleges are advised not to assure students of bursaries when recruiting since bursary awards are subject to administration processes and the availability of funding. Colleges need to communicate the bursary processes on their websites, in newspapers and in class during orientation and induction through brochures, posters and external newsletters. Closing dates for the submission of application forms must be stated clearly in the advertisements issued by colleges and on the bursary application forms.

The participants' emphasized that they enrolled at Majuba TVET College because they were from disadvantaged backgrounds and their parents could not afford to pay fees. While NSFAS has assisted most students in public TVET colleges (supported by the graphs and tables on the CPD campus), the extent to which students have succeeded academically remains a concern. The participants stated that not being able to pay for proper private off-campus residences would negatively affect their academic performance. Delays in receiving NSFAS funding cause stress as they fear eviction if they do not pay their rent on time. These challenges may contribute to poor academic performance.

6.7 Requirements for New Student NCV and Report 191 Policy

6.7.1. National Certificate (Vocational)

This program consists of theory and practical training and provides students with the content and practical skills required within a work environment. The programs are quality assured by Umalusi. This is a three-year program (one year per level) with full certificates on NQF Levels 2, 3 and 4. The admission requirements for NQF Level 2 are Grade 9 plus college requirements per program but for the DHET, it is Grade 9.

For the complete NCV subject results, the marks for the following three components are compulsory:

- ICASS
- ISAT
- EXAMINATION

ICASS for NCV includes four tests and three assignments. The student must obtain 50% or more in all vocational subjects to qualify to write the examination. Life Orientation and First Additional Language students must obtain 40% to qualify. For Mathematical Literacy and Mathematics, students must obtain 30%.

ISAT is a practical assessment in all NCV vocational subjects. It takes three years to acquire a qualification. Student must obtain 50% to qualify for the exam.

In external examinations for vocational subjects, students must achieve 50% to continue to the next level. For Life Orientation and First Additional Language, the requirement is 40% and it is 30% in Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy. The student only qualifies for the next level if she/he passes five out of seven subjects and qualifies for a supplementary exam if she /he obtained 35% for the exam.

6.7.2. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT TASKS FOR NCV

Support activities include tests, observation, discussions, practical demonstrations and informal experiences in the classroom that are used to monitor students' progress on a continuous basis and evaluate how learning progresses.

6.7.3. Nated/Report 191

The program involves 18 months' theoretical studies at college and 18 months' relevant practical skills experience at a work place. A full certificate is offered for N4, N5 and N6 for business studies. The admission requirement is Grade 12 plus college requirements per program.

For Report 191 students to receive their complete subject results or their results at the end of the year, the marks for these two components are compulsory:

- ICASS
- EXAMINATION

In terms of ICASS, each student must complete the stipulated number of assessment tasks for each subject in a Report 191 academic year.

The student must obtain at least 40% in the external examination in order to proceed to the next level. The student only qualifies for the next level if she/he passes three of the four subjects. Those that obtain 35% qualify for a supplementary examination. If a student fails two or three of the four subjects, she/he is transferred to the Open Learning distance programme until she/he passes those subjects.

6.7.4. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT TASKS FOR NATED

Additional support tasks involving tests, observation, discussions, practical demonstrations, and informal classroom interactions are used to monitor students' progress on a daily basis and discuss how learning is progressing. The following tables show enrolment in NCV from 2017 to 2019 and Nated R191 for the first and second semesters from 2017 to 2019. They show that large numbers of students initially registered, but the numbers dropped by the end of their programs.

TABLE 4: ENROLMENT NUMBERS FOR NCV–2019 CPD CAMPUS

| PROGRAMME | L2 | | L3 | | L4 | | TOTAL | |
|--------------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| | PLANNED | ACTUAL | PLANNED | ACTUAL | PLANNED | ACTUAL | PLANNED | ACTUAL |
| HOSPITALITY | 210 | 279 | 146 | 139 | 90 | 64 | 446 | 482 |
| OFFICE ADMINISTRATION | 185 | 228 | 130 | 115 | 115 | 139 | 430 | 511 |
| TOURISM | 210 | 261 | 173 | 77 | 77 | 112 | 460 | 491 |
| TOTAL | 605 | 768 | 449 | 282 | 282 | 315 | 1336 | 1484 |

TABLE 5: ENROLMENT NUMBERS FOR NCV–2018 CPD CAMPUS

| PROGRAMME | L2 | | L3 | | L4 | | TOTAL | |
|--------------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| | PLANNED | ACTUAL | PLANNED | ACTUAL | PLANNED | ACTUAL | PLANNED | ACTUAL |
| HOSPITALITY | 210 | 185 | 146 | 112 | 90 | 55 | 446 | 352 |
| OFFICE ADMINISTRATION | 185 | 220 | 130 | 156 | 115 | 120 | 430 | 496 |
| TOURISM | 210 | 270 | 173 | 70 | 77 | 100 | 460 | 440 |
| TOTAL | 605 | 675 | 449 | 338 | 282 | 275 | 1336 | 1288 |

TABLE 6: ENROLMENT NUMBERS FOR NCV–2017 CPD CAMPUS

| PROGRAMME | L2 | | L3 | | L4 | | TOTAL | |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| | PLANNED | ACTUAL | PLANNED | ACTUAL | PLANNED | ACTUAL | PLANNED | ACTUAL |
| HOSPITALITY | 210 | 150 | 146 | 104 | 90 | 53 | 446 | 307 |
| OFFICE ADMINISTRATION | 185 | 200 | 130 | 144 | 115 | 115 | 430 | 459 |
| TOURISM | 210 | 212 | 173 | 66 | 77 | 89 | 460 | 367 |
| TOTAL | 605 | 562 | 449 | 314 | 282 | 257 | 1336 | 1133 |

TABLE 7: ENROLMENT FOR R191 N4 - 2019 FOR SEMESTER 1 AND 2 CPD CAMPUS

| PROGRAMME | N4 | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| | Planned 2019 | Actual 2019 | Planned Semester 1 | Actual Semester 1 | Planned Semester 2 | Actual Semester 2 | Planned 2019 |
| Business Management | | 0 | | | 0 | | 150 |
| Financial Management | 300 | 302 | 150 | 182 | 118 | 120 | 240 |
| Human Resource Management | 180 | 144 | 95 | 75 | 105 | 69 | 210 |
| Introductory Business | | 126 | | 73 | -73 | 53 | |
| Public Management | 231 | 238 | 138 | 148 | 83 | 90 | 240 |
| TOTAL | 711 | 810 | 383 | 478 | 233 | 332 | 840 |

TABLE 8: ENROLMENT FOR R191 N5 – 2019 FOR SEMESTER 1 AND 2 CPD CAMPUS

| PROGRAMME | N5 | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| | Planned 2019 | Actual 2019 | Planned Semester 1 | Actual Semester 1 | Planned Semester 2 | Actual Semester 2 |
| Business Management | | 73 | 90 | 73 | 77 | |
| Financial Management | | 243 | 120 | 99 | 141 | 144 |
| Human Resource Management | | 181 | 105 | 96 | 114 | 85 |
| Introductory Business | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Management | | 204 | 120 | 99 | 141 | 105 |
| TOTAL | | 701 | 135 | 367 | 473 | 334 |

TABLE 9: ENROLMENT FOR R191 N6 FOR 2019 SEMESTER 1 AND 2 CPD CAMPUS

| PROGRAMME | N6 | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| | Planned 2019 | Actual 2019 | Planned Semester 1 | Actual Semester 1 | Planned Semester 2 | Actual Semester 2 |
| Business Management | 120 | 140 | 60 | 80 | 40 | 60 |
| Financial Management | 220 | 216 | 110 | 133 | 87 | 83 |
| Human Resource Management | 185 | 183 | 93 | 100 | 85 | 83 |
| Introductory Business | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Management | 240 | 117 | 120 | 66 | 174 | 51 |
| TOTAL | 765 | 656 | 383 | 379 | 386 | 277 |

6.8 Student Support Service Policy

Student Support Service (SSS) aims to facilitate a smooth transition from one educational level to another. Its services include psychological support, living and learning communities, disability support, diversity, specialized learning support, financial support, admissions, cultural activities, student leadership and organization, and permits.

The office aims to promote an enabling learning environment, to provide career guidance, to counsel and assist students during admission and to provide advice on courses.

6.9 SSS Rights and Responsibilities

Members have the right to:

- Request in writing from SSS notification of a student's eligibility for residence,
- Approach the SSS to clarify a student's request for residence and academic improvements.

6.10 Personal Counselling

Career counselling and advice is offered to students to ensure that they make the correct career choice. Counselling is also available to assist students who encounter personal problems. Where required, students may be referred to specialist services external to the college.

6.11 Student Representative Council (SRC)

Section 9 (1) of the Further Education and Training College Act 16 of 2006 (as amended by Act 3 of 2012) stipulates that, 'every public College must establish a Council, an Academic Board and a Student Representative Council (SRC)'. Designated members of Majuba TVET College serve on the two statutory college structures, namely, the College Council and the Academic Board.

SRC members acquire skills to become successful future leaders. The policies stress that student leaders should be valued, appreciated and considered to integral to the governing structures of the College.

Support should be provided to both academic staff and students living on campus and in private residences, including students with disabilities.

The graphs and tables above indicate that Majuba TVET College campuses enrolled a large number of students. However, the high drop-out rates suggest that many quit college due to the barriers they encountered. Mutual support may improve student retention and in turn improve their academic performance (Pascarella et al., 2013). Disadvantaged students find it difficult to seek self-help interventions, and may not have the integration skills necessary to become involved in support

programmes (Ratlebjane, 2016). This calls for a strengthening of support services, especially for students that find it difficult to seek help, as was the case with some of the study participants.

6.12 Conclusion

The analysis of the above policies suggests that there is an urgent need for Majuba TVET College to review its governance approach. Based on the experiences shared by the participants, there is a direct relationship between living in off-campus private residences and poor academic performance. It seems that the policies do not live up to their promises and do not accommodate students' needs. Furthermore, the statistics show that the number of students enrolled does not correspond with other levels or Ns. They also point to very low pass rates. This suggests that many students do not write the final examinations, drop out due to the challenges they encounter during their studies, or fail the year.

The chapter also highlighted the many challenges faced by the participants at Majuba TVET College. The findings point to a desperate need for on-campus residences in order to improve students' academic performance. They also show that the participants confronted deep psychological challenges that they are afraid to make known. Poverty is at the root of many of the problems. The college also lacks sufficient facilities to assist students with their studies.

The following chapter presents the study's conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This qualitative study investigated the relationship between students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences and their academic performance. This chapter discusses the findings in relation to the three research questions, makes recommendations based on the findings, and offers suggestions for further research.

7.2 Conclusions

The responses from the Majuba College students who participated in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions revealed that most students' homes are far from the college. They come from different backgrounds. Some of the participants lived with both their parents and a single parent, while others lived with grandparents or other family members. A few also stated that they came from child-headed households. Some parents/guardians are employed, while others do not work and depend on social grants.

7.2.1. Social challenges

The participants cited many negative social issues in relation to living in private off-campus residences. Some of their roommates took drugs, played loud music, or talked loudly. Some roommates entertain their boyfriends and girlfriends in the room that is shared by a group of students. There were reports of landlords abusing students both emotionally and physically. Burglaries were also reported and some participants stated that fellow students stole clothes, money and even food from each other. The participants were further exposed to danger when they walked back to their residences in the dark after platoon classes. Those that used public transport were often dropped off far from their residences. Funding and finances were other challenges that left them with little or no food.

Living in such conditions may result in severe psychological issues, suggesting the need for the college to offer psychological support services. The SSS does not appear to be providing sufficient support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. There is a need for support from registration through to the end of the program. Furthermore, the participants highlighted the need for on-campus residences or, in their absence, college transport to and from private off-campus residences.

7.2.2. Learning challenges

The participants stated that they could not study properly in overcrowded private off-campus residences. Exhaustion due to travelling long distances to and from college, hunger, and changing residences frequently also negatively impact their studies. They added that they did not have proper learning material to use at their private off-campus residences. At college, they had limited time to study in the library because it does not offer a 24-hour service. They have no Wi-Fi even during college hours. The many learning challenges frustrated them to the extent that they did not attend classes. The graphs presented in the previous chapter reflect the extent of absenteeism in relation to poor academic performance and later huge drop-out rates.

7.2.3. Lack of facilities in private off-campus residences

Many of the participants reported that their rooms lacked basic furniture such as a chair and desk, and cooking facilities and utensils. They used outside toilets and fetched water from taps that were located outside the house. They mentioned that they woke up late and were too tired to attend classes. Sometimes they were overloaded with college work and unable to study for their tests, including final examinations. Omotayo (2010 p. 516) posited that work overload, poor time management and stress relating to examinations and tests are the consequences of academic issues. He added that facilities are the cornerstone of college work.

7.2.4. Lack of College facilities

The participants noted that many classrooms at the college are overcrowded and lack facilities. The college provides textbooks, but if they fail, they have to return the textbook. They also mentioned that the college has no Wi-Fi except in the library and the library is thus always over-crowded. Furthermore, there is only one library available to students. It closes at four o'clock during term time and at six o'clock during the examination period. During October and November examinations, the library is over-crowded because both NCV and NATED students are writing examinations. The college also does not provide sufficient computers or laptops for students. Finally, it was claimed that Majuba TVET College does not cater sufficiently for students with disabilities. Hulton et al. (2016) contends that the lack of as well as poor condition of facilities changed students' behavior, and undermined their health and overall welfare. The participants were adamant that the lack of facilities on campus and in their private off-campus residences compromised their academic performance.

7.2.5. Lack of College support

The participants stated that peer educators are provided in some subjects, and that some lecturers provide previous examination papers. The SSS office provides limited support, but there is no follow up throughout the program. Very little is provided in the way of medical assistance. The participants also mentioned that the college did not ask them about their private off-campus residences. Some of the experiences that the participants had to endure caused depression and anxiety that led to poor academic performance. Ratlebjane (2016) confirms that factors such as depression, sexual assault and trauma lead to poor academic performance.

7.2.6. Lack of Parental involvement

Some of the participants stated that they missed the parental discipline they experienced at home. Most said that they would be reluctant to talk about their problems with their lecturers, some of whom shout at them. They thus tend to bunk class if they fail to do their homework or when they are feeling stressed. Some added that their parents do not understand the problems they face. They mentioned that their parents did not know where they live and even how many private off-campus residences they changed over time. They added that they are reluctant to tell their parents about changing or the reasons for doing so. The majority of participants stated that they lacked a healthy relationship with their parents, came from a dysfunctional family, lacked social support, and suffered from anger, frustration and hopelessness (Buns et al., 2010). Some participants were from child-headed households. The lack of parental or family support contributed to their poor academic performance.

These findings point to the need for all stakeholders to support college students. Furthermore, college stakeholders need to be aware of students' backgrounds so that they are able to assist them.

7.2.7. Delayed NSFAS funding

Most of the participants depended on NSFAS funding. They complained that, although they provided all the required documents, NSFAS does not pay on time. Delays in receiving funding caused many challenges for the participants who had to deal with the wrath of their landlords who required their rent by the end of the month. The lack of money for food, rent and transport prevented the participants from attending classes, resulting in poor academic performance and eventually dropping-out. Such circumstances also resulted in female students taking up with "blessers", indulging in substance abuse and cohabiting with partners in order to save costs. It was also noted that Majuba TVET College has experienced many student protests due to non-payment of NSFAS funding. These interrupt academic programs, contributing to poor academic performance.

Omotayo (2010) asserts that the government needs to address the issue of student residences as a matter of urgency. Jones et al. (2015) note that adapting to private off-campus residence is challenging. He adds student residences and funding are the most important factors that determine disadvantaged South African students' academic performance.

These findings point to the need for a review of NSFAS funding and for the College to assist students by following up on NSFAS payments.

7.3 Recommendations

Arising from the study's findings, the following recommendations are made to Majuba TVET College management and the DHET:

- Improve teaching and learning processes and promote positive interaction that will enable students to integrate into the social and academic life of the college. The college should capacitate lecturers with the requisite skills and techniques to assist them in dealing with students from diverse backgrounds.
- Help students to understand academic policies and procedures. This will make them aware of their rights and responsibilities as students.
- Provide sufficient resources on campus and ensure that private off-campus residences have the necessary resources to support student learning, including the internet and data, student laptops, more computers, labs and a library that operates 24 hours a day.
- Monitor students' academic performance before they fail. Provide counseling to students experiencing psychological problems that could hinder interpersonal engagement, adjustment to campus life and academic performance. The college should provide internal psychologists who will work with external psychologists to assist students who cannot cope with social problems and academic problems.
- Assist campus staff and family members to deal with students who have emotional problems. Skill students to learn in new or more effective ways to cope with stress and other difficulties and to manage their lives.
- Revise policies on private off-campus residences with regard to the living arrangements for students, for example, the size of the room and the number of students sharing the room.
- If the DHET uses private residences, they must be governed by the TVET College or the DHET.
- Private residence landlords should be monitored by the DHET.
- Private off-campus residences should also cater for the needs of students with disabilities.
- All TVET Colleges should have on-campus residences.

- The DHET should pay for students' private off-campus residences.
- Each private residence room should preferably be single or double.
- Safety and security should be a priority in both private off-campus residences and on-campus residences.
- Build more TVET colleges or universities so that students can register in the town closest to home.
- Provide facilities for students and faculty to access learning support materials and programs. Raise awareness of cultural diversity and different styles of learning. Provide appropriate assistance and opportunities for students with disabilities.
- Help students to access all programs, services and activities at the college.
- Equip new students to understand community social issues.
- The SSS should have viable follow up systems for students at any stage of their program.

7.4 Suggestions for further research

Based on the findings as well as the suggestions made by the participants, the following areas are suggested for further research:

- ✓ Studies that cover a larger sample of students from different colleges across different provinces would increase the generalizability of findings.
- ✓ A review of studies that compare students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences.
- ✓ More research is required on HE as a whole in South Africa.
- ✓ A study on lecturers' perceptions of the factors that impact students' academic performance.
- ✓ Research on DHET stakeholders' views on the impact of living in private off-campus residence on academic performance.

7.5 Conclusion

This study analyzed students' experiences of living in private off-campus residences from the students' perspective. The participants identified the many challenges that arise as a result of living in private off-campus residences and how these influence their academic performance. It is envisaged that the findings and the recommendations arising from this study will assist TVET Colleges, the DHET and other stakeholders to review current policies and practices relating to student residences. It is also hoped that by addressing the issues highlighted by the participants, there will be an improvement in the quality of the lives of students who live in private off-campus residences which will, in turn, improve their academic performance, to the benefit of themselves, their communities and society at large.

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APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONARE

Please answer the following questions by filling in your answer in the space provided. I assure you that your name will not mentioned in the report. No confidential data will be published without your consent. Hence the participant is assured of privacy of their information. These demographic questions will help me to find which students are living in off-campus residence.

PERSONAL AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions by shading and filling the relevant answer in the spaces given below.

1. **Sex**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. **Age**

- ☐ 19 - 25 years
- ☐ 26 - 30 years
- ☐ 31 and over years

3. **Years of staying in off campus private residence**

- ☐ Below 18 months
- ☐ 1 - 2 years
- ☐ 3 years and above

4. **Distance from home area**

- ☐ 1 - 100kms
- ☐ 101 -200kms
- ☐ 201-300kms
- ☐ 400kms and above

5. **How many students stay in each room at your residence?**

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4

5. **Indicate the level in which you are studying**

- ☐ NCV level 2
- ☐ Nated N4
- ☐

6. Which instructional program are you studying?

Specify.

7. Why did you choose to study at Majuba TVET College?

8. Why you choose to study far away from your home?

9. How are you paying for your studies at Majuba TVET College?

10. Who pays for your accommodation? Please tick.

| | | | | | |
|--------|--|-------|--|------------------------------|--|
| PARENT | | NSFAS | | OTHER (Please Specify) | |
|--------|--|-------|--|------------------------------|--|

APPENDIX B

Focus Group

The aim of the focus group discussion is to discuss and find out how students feel and think about their experiences of living in off campus private residences, in relation to their academic performance. They will also discuss how they could be assisted regarding their academic performance if necessary. The information that will be gathered will be applied in my research. The participant's confidentiality and anonymity will be assured. The names of the participants will not be disclosed in the report. No confidential data will be available without the consent of the respondents. The aim of the research is to "Understand the Relationship between TVET Students' Experiences of Living in Off-campus Private Residences and their Academic Performance".

The participants will be put into groups of five to discuss the questions below. A representative from each group will then present the discussion to the entire group. The discussions will be video recorded and transcribed.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What are TVET student's experience if living in private residences?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS IN GROUPS OF FIVE:

1. How did you find the accommodation?
2. How much do you pay at the end of the month?
3. What is the rental fee due date?
4. Who pays for your accommodation and how (types of payment)?
5. What do you like the most about your residence?
6. What are the rules of your residence?
7. How long have you stayed in your current residence?

Explain briefly.

8. Do you experience any problems in your residence? yes/no

Briefly explain.

- 8.1 If yes what actions and procedures are taken?

8.2 To whom do you report the problem within the residence?

2. How does the experience of living in off-campus private residences influence TVET students' academic performance?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS IN GROUPS OF 5:

1. Mention the problems you have encountered in living in off-campus private accommodation.
2. Suggest what you would do to eliminate the problem/s you have encountered in living off-campus residence.
3. How do you want the College to support you regarding the problem/s you have encountered?
4. How do the methods and styles of teaching and learning accommodate your living in off-campus residences?
5. Does your college have enough facilities to support your learning? What are those facilities?

3. Why does the experience of living in private residences influence TVET student's academic performance in the way that it does?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS IN GROUPS OF 5:

1. How do your lecturers/ SRC/Student Support Service/PEER GROUP assist you during your studies?
2. Will you complete your diploma in this college? If NO what Will you do about your academic progress and living in the off-campus residence?
3. What would be your recommendation to rectify problems mentioned above?

APPENDIX C

In-depth interview questions

The in-depth interview questions are intended to understand your experiences of living in off-campus private residences and the extent to which this relates to your academic performance. Your cooperation will be importantly appreciated and I guarantee that the information will be confidential and shall be used only for the purpose of this educational study.

Section A: Personal Data (please tick the appropriate option)

1. Sex

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. Age

- ☐ 18 years
- ☐ 19 - 25 years
- ☐ 26 - 30 years
- ☐ 31 years and above

3. Years of staying in off campus residence

- ☐ Below 18 months
- ☐ 1 - 2 years
- ☐ 3 years and above

4. Distance from home area

- ☐ 1 - 100kms
- ☐ 101 -200kms
- ☐ 201-300kms
- ☐ 400kms and above

5. How many students stay in each room at your residence?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4

5. Indicate the level in which you are studying

- ☐ NCV level 2
- ☐ Nated N4

6. Which institutional program are you studying? Please specify.

Section B: Open-ended questions

1. How did you hear about studying at TVET Colleges?
2. Why did you choose to study at Majuba TVET College?
3. How far is it from your home?
4. Describe the home that you come from.
5. How did you find the current off-campus residence that you are living in?
6. Describe the off-campus residence that you are living in.
7. Describe your experiences of living in the private residence.
8. Describe the space and furniture/equipment that is available in your room to support your learning activities.
9. Describe any learning challenges that you are facing by living in the private residence.
10. Describe how you have been performing academically since you have been living in the private residence.
11. Do you think that your academic performance is influenced in any way by you living in the private residence?
12. Given a chance would you prefer staying in on-campus residence? If so, please justify.
13. In your own opinion what do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of staying in private residences?
14. Do you face any disturbances in your room of residence when studying?
15. In what ways do you think the distance travelled to and from the residence affects your ability to learn?
16. Is there a mechanism for you to communicate your experiences of living in private residence to the Majuba TVET College? If yes explain further.
17. How much do you or your sponsor approximately pay for residence fees per year/semester?
18. In your view does the amount that you pay for residence fees sufficiently cover the facilities that are provided to you in the

residence?

19. What facilities are not currently in place at your residence that you think will help promote academic performance?

20. In your own opinion is the private residential environment conducive for TVET students to live in and to study in?

21. Is there anything that I have not asked you pertaining to your experience of living in the private residence and how this may affect your academic performance that you would like to share?

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX D

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Faculty of Education

Informed Consent Form

Date: ____ / ____ / 2018

Dear Parent/Mzali

Your child's teacher,is studying towards a Master's in Education. As part of data collection, he/she will be conducting In-depth interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions. The purpose of my research is to "Understand the Relationship between TVET Students' Experiences of Living in Off-campus Private residences and their Academic Performance".

If you give permission for your child to be part of the qualitative research, please sign below:

I, (name and surname), parent / legal guardian of (child name and surname), give permission for my child to be involved in qualitative research study. I confirm that I understand the nature of the research, and that I can withdraw my child's participation at any time if it conflicts his/her rights.

Signature of parent / guardian

Date: ____ / ____ / 2018.

For any information about this research project, please contact the following staff members at the School of education, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Mrs J. M. Mtshali (Researcher): 072 720 5133; jmmtshali7@gmail.com

Dr Sarasvathie Reddy (Supervisor): 082 826 8808; Reddys15@ukzn.ac.za

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Faculty of Education

Informed Consent Form

Date: ____ / ____ /2018

Dear Learner

Your teacheris studying towards a Master's in Education. As part of data collection, you will be the part of In-depth interviews, questionnaire and focus group discussion. The purpose of my research is to "Understand the Relationship between TVET Students' Experiences of Living in Off-campus Private residences and their Academic Performance".

If you give permission to be my part of the qualitative research, please sign below:

I, (name and surname), accept to be involved in your research study. I confirm that I understand the nature of the research, and that I can withdraw my participation at any time, if it violates my study program.

Signature of learner

Date: ____ / ____ / 2018.

For any information about this research, please contact the following staff members at the School of education, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Mrs J. M. Mtshali (Researcher): 072 720 5133

Dr Sarasvathie Reddy (Supervisor): 082 826 8808

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Faculty of Education

Informed Consent Form

Date: ____ / ____ / 2018

Dear Principal

I am, _____ studying towards a Master's in Education. I like to undergo my qualitative research in your institution at Majuba TVET College (CPD). I will use In-depth interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions to collect data from relevant students. The purpose of my research is to "Understand the Relationship between TVET Students' Experiences of Living in Off-campus Residences and their Academic Performance". It will not be made public in any way.

If you consider giving permission in your institution, please sign below:

I, (name and surname) _____, the principal of _____, give permission for lecturer to undergo an In-depth interview, questionnaire and focus group and involve students in this qualitative research study. I confirm that I understand the nature of the research, and that I can withdraw student's participation at any time if found that this study infringes human rights and their right to study.

Signature of the Principal

School stamp

Date: ____ / ____ / 2018.

For any information about this research project, please contact the following staff members at the School of education, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Mrs J. M. Mtshali (Researcher): 072 720 5133

Dr Sarasvathie Reddy (Supervisor): 082 826 8808

APPENDIX E



higher education
& training
Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DHET 004: APPENDIX 1:

APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

| | | | |
|------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1.1. | Title (Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | MRS | |
| 1.2 | Name and surname | Josephine Makhosazane Mtshali | |
| 1.3 | Postal address | P O Box 2414 NEWCASTLE 2940 | |
| 1.4 | Contact details | Tel | N/A |
| | | Cell | 072 720 5133 |
| | | Fax | N/A |
| | | Email | jmmtshali7@gmail.com |
| 1.5 | Name of institution where enrolled | University of KwaZulu Natal | |
| 1.6 | Field of study | Education | |
| 1.7 | Qualification registered for | Please tick relevant option: | |
| | | Doctoral Degree (PhD) | |
| | | Master's Degree | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Other (please specify) | |

2. DETAILS OF THE STUDY

| | |
|-----|---|
| 2.1 | Title of the study |
| | Relating Technical Vocational and Training (TVET) College Students' Experiences of Living in Private Off-campus Residence to Academic Performance: A Case of Majuba College |
| 2.2 | Purpose of the study |
| | Is to understand the relationship between TVET students' experiences of living in off-campus residences and their academic performance. |

3. PARTICIPANTS AND TYPE/S OF ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE COLLEGE

Please indicate the types of research activities you are planning to undertake in the College, as well as the categories of persons who are expected to participate in your study (for example, lecturers, students, College Principals, Deputy Principals, Campus Heads, Support Staff, Heads of Departments), including the number of participants for each activity.

| 3.1 | Complete questionnaires | Expected participants (e.g. students, lecturers, College Principal) | Number of participants |
|-----|---|---|------------------------|
| | | a) 10 males b) 10 females c) d) e) | 20 |
| 3.2 | Participate in individual interviews | Expected participants | Number of participants |
| | | a) 10 males b) 10 females c) d) e) | 20 |
| 3.3 | Participate in focus group discussions/ workshops | Expected participants | Number of participants |
| | | a) 2 groups of b) 5 males and 5 c) females d) e) | 20 |
| 3.4 | Complete standardised tests (e.g. Psychometric Tests) | Expected participants | Number of participants |
| | | a) b) c) N/A d) e) | |
| 3.5 | Undertake observations Please specify | N/A | |
| 3.6 | Other Please specify | N/A | |

DHET 004: APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES

4. SUPPORT NEEDED FROM THE COLLEGE

| <i>Please indicate the type of support required from the College (Please tick relevant option/s)</i> | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Type of support | Yes | No |
| 4.1 The College will be required to identify participants and provide their contact details to the researcher. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.2 The College will be required to distribute questionnaires/instruments to participants on behalf of the researcher. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.3 The College will be required to provide official documents. <i>Please specify the documents required below</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| N/A | | |
| 4.4 The College will be required to provide data (only if this data is not available from the DHET). <i>Please specify the data fields required, below</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| N/A | | |
| 4.5 Other, please specify below | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| N/A | | |

5. DOCUMENTS TO BE ATTACHED TO THE APPLICATION

| <i>The following 2 (two) documents must be attached as a prerequisite for approval to undertake research in the College</i> | |
|---|--|
| 5.1 | Ethics Clearance Certificate issued by a University Ethics Committee |
| 5.2 | Research proposal approved by a University |

DHET 004: APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES

6. DECLARATION BY THE APPLICANT

I undertake to use the information that I acquire through my research, in a balanced and a responsible manner. I furthermore take note of, and agree to adhere to the following conditions:

- a) I will schedule my research activities in consultation with the said College/s and participants in order not to interrupt the programme of the said College/s.
- b) I agree that involvement by participants in my research study is voluntary, and that participants have a right to decline to participate in my research study.
- c) I will obtain signed consent forms from participants prior to any engagement with them.
- d) I will obtain written parental consent of students under 18 years of age, if they are expected to participate in my research.
- e) I will inform participants about the use of recording devices such as tape-recorders and cameras, and participants will be free to reject them if they wish.
- f) I will honour the right of participants to privacy, anonymity, confidentiality and respect for human dignity at all times. Participants will not be identifiable in any way from the results of my research, unless written consent is obtained otherwise.
- g) I will not include the names of the said College/s or research participants in my research report, without the written consent of each of the said individuals and/or College/s.
- h) I will send the draft research report to research participants before finalisation, in order to validate the accuracy of the information in the report.
- i) I will not use the resources of the said College/s in which I am conducting research (such as stationery, photocopies, faxes, and telephones), for my research study.
- j) Should I require data for this study, I will first request data directly from the Department of Higher Education and Training. I will request data from the College/s only if the DHET does not have the required data.
- k) I will include a disclaimer in any report, publication or presentation arising from my research, that the findings and recommendations of the study do not represent the views of the said College/s or the Department of Higher Education and Training.
- l) I will provide a summary of my research report to the Head of the College/s in which I undertook my research, for information purposes.

I declare that all statements made in this application are true and accurate. I accept the conditions associated with the granting of approval to conduct research and undertake to abide by them.

SIGNATURE

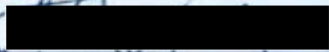
DATE

[Redacted Signature]
12/10/18

DHET 004: APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES

FOR OFFICIAL USE

DECISION BY HEAD OF COLLEGE

| <i>Please tick relevant decision and provide conditions/reasons where applicable</i> | | |
|--|---|---|
| Decision | | <i>Please tick relevant option below</i> |
| 1 | Application approved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | Application approved subject to certain conditions. <i>Specify conditions below</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |
| 3 | Application not approved. <i>Provide reasons for non-approval below</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |
| NAME OF COLLEGE | | MAJUBA TVET COLLEGE |
| NAME AND SURNAME OF HEAD OF COLLEGE | | SJ. MLOTSHWA |
| SIGNATURE | |  |
| DATE | | 31/10/2018 |



APPENDIX F

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Faculty of Education
Informed Consent Form

Date: 29 / 10 / 2018

Dear Learner

Your teacher, Mrs. J. M. Mtshali is studying towards a Master in Education. As part of data collection, you will be the part of In-depth interview, questionnaire and focus group. The purpose of my research is to "Understand the Relationship between TVET Students' Experiences of Living in Off-campus Private residences and their Academic Performance".

If you give permission to be my part of qualitative research, please sign below:

I, (name and surname) Saras Reddy, give permission and to be involve me in his research study. I confirm that I understand the nature of the research, and that I can withdraw my participation at any time.

Signature of learner [Redacted]

Date: 01 / 11 / 2018.

0738853480

For any information about this research, please contact the following staff members at the School of education, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Mrs J. M. Mtshali (Researcher): 072 720 5133

Dr Saras Reddy (Supervisor): 082 826 8808

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions by filling in your answer in the space provided. I assure you that your name will not be mentioned in the report. No confidential data will be published without your consent. Hence the participant is assured of privacy of their information. These demographic questions will help me to find which students are living in off-campus residence.

PERSONAL AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions by shading and filling the relevant answer in the spaces given below.

1. Sex

- ☐ Male
- ☒ Female

2. Age

- ☐ 18 years
- ☒ 19 - 25 years
- ☐ 26 - 30 years
- ☐ 31 years and above

3. Years of staying in off campus private residence

- ☒ Below 18 months
- ☐ 1 - 2 years
- ☐ 3 years and above

4. Distance from home area

- ☐ 1 - 100kms
- ☒ 101 - 200kms
- ☐ 201-300kms
- ☐ 400kms and above

5. How many students stay in each room at your residence?

- ☐ 1
- ☒ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4

5. Indicate the level in which you are studying

- ☒ NCV level 2
- ☐ Nated N4
- ☐

6. Which instructional program are you studying?

Specify. Tourism

7. Why did you choose to study at Majuba TVET College?

Because there are no TVET colleges near home

8. Why you choose to study far away from your home?

9. How are you paying for your studies at Majuba TVET
College? NSFAS

10. Who pays for your accommodation? Please tick.

| | | | | | |
|--------|--------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| PARENT | <input type="checkbox"/> | NSFAS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | OTHER (Please Specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------|--------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Faculty of Education
Informed Consent Form

Date: 29 / 10 / 2018

Dear Learner

Your teacher, Mrs J. M. Mtshali is studying towards a Master in Education. As part of data collection, you will be the part of In-depth interview, questionnaire and focus group. The purpose of my research is to "Understand the Relationship between TVET Students' Experiences of Living in Off-campus Private residences and their Academic Performance".

If you give permission to be my part of qualitative research, please sign below:

I, (name and surname) Cebille Bongephwe Zondo, give permission and to be involve me in his research study. I confirm that I understand the nature of the research, and that I can withdraw my participation at any time.

Signature of learner C.B. Zondo

Date: 01 / 11 / 2018.

071 500 4414

For any information about this research, please contact the following staff members at the School of education, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Mrs J. M. Mtshali (Researcher): 072 720 5133

Dr Saras Reddy (Supervisor): 082 826 8808

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions by filling in your answer in the space provided. I assure you that your name will not be mentioned in the report. No confidential data will be published without your consent. Hence the participant is assured of privacy of their information. These demographic questions will help me to find which students are living in off-campus residence.

PERSONAL AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions by shading and filling the relevant answer in the spaces given below.

1. Sex
 - ☐ Male
 - ☒ Female
2. Age
 - ☐ 18 years
 - ☒ 19 - 25 years
 - ☐ 26 - 30 years
 - ☐ 31 years and above
3. Years of staying in off campus private residence
 - ☐ Below 18 months
 - ☒ 1 - 2 years
 - ☐ 3 years and above
4. Distance from home area
 - ☒ 1 - 100kms
 - ☐ 101 - 200kms
 - ☐ 201 - 300kms
 - ☐ 400kms and above
5. How many students stay in each room at your residence?
 - ☐ 1
 - ☒ 2
 - ☐ 3
 - ☐ 4
5. Indicate the level in which you are studying
 - ☒ NCV level 2
 - ☐ Nated N4
 - ☐
6. Which instructional program are you studying?
Specify. Hospitality
7. Why did you choose to study at Majuba TVET College?
8. Why you choose to study far away from your home?

9. How are you paying for your studies at Majuba TVET
College? NSFAS

10. Who pays for your accommodation? Please tick.

| | | | | | |
|--------|--|-------|---|------------------------|--|
| PARENT | | NSFAS | X | OTHER (Please Specify) | |
|--------|--|-------|---|------------------------|--|

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Faculty of Education

Informed Consent Form

Date: 11 / 11 / 2018

Dear Learner

Your teacher MRS J M MTSHALI is studying towards a Master's in Education. As part of data collection, you will be the part of In-depth interviews, questionnaire and focus group discussion. The purpose of my research is to "Understand the Relationship between TVET Students' Experiences of Living in Off-campus Private residences and their Academic Performance".

If you give permission to be my part of the qualitative research, please sign below:

I, (name and surname) Nonhlanhla B. Molezi, accept to be involved in your research study. I confirm that I understand the nature of the research, and that I can withdraw my participation at any time, if it violates my study program.

Signature of learner NB

Date: 11 / 11 / 2018.

060 792 6617

For any information about this research, please contact the following staff members at the School of education, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Mrs J. M. Mtshali (Researcher): 072 720 5133

Dr Saras Reddy (Supervisor): 082 826 8808

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions by filling in your answer in the space provided. I assure you that your name will not mentioned in the report. No confidential data will be published without your consent. Hence the participant is assured of privacy of their information. These demographic questions will help me to find which students are living in off-campus residence.

PERSONAL AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions by shading and filling the relevant answer in the spaces given below.

1. Sex

- ☐ Male
- ☒ Female

2. Age

- ☐ 18 years
- ☐ 19 - 25 years
- ☒ 26 - 30 years
- ☐ 31 years and above

3. Years of staying in off campus private residence

- ☒ Below 18 months
- ☐ 1 - 2 years
- ☐ 3 years and above

4. Distance from home area

- ☒ 1 - 100kms
- ☐ 101 - 200kms
- ☐ 201-300kms
- ☐ 400kms and above

5. How many students stay in each room at your residence?

- ☐ 1
- ☒ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4

5. Indicate the level in which you are studying

- ☒ NCV level 2
- ☐ Nated N4
- ☐

6. Which instructional program are you studying?

Specify. OFFICE Administration

7. Why did you choose to study at Majuba TVET College?

Because OF Free Funding

8. Why you choose to study far away from your home?

Infrastructure is not well adapted
For my disability.

9. How are you paying for your studies at Majuba TVET
College? NSFAS

10. Who pays for your accommodation? Please tick.

| | | | | | |
|--------|--|-------|---|------------------------|--|
| PARENT | | NSFAS | X | OTHER (Please Specify) | |
|--------|--|-------|---|------------------------|--|

TVET College Student Experiences

ORIGINALITY REPORT

10%

SIMILARITY INDEX

8%

INTERNET SOURCES

2%

PUBLICATIONS

7%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1

researchspace.ukzn.ac.za

Internet Source

1%

2

soe.ukzn.ac.za

Internet Source

1%

3

orbitcollege.co.za

Internet Source

1%

4

Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal

Student Paper

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Submitted to Midlands State University

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